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Franciscans at Prayer

Edited by

Timothy J. Johnson

BRILL

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General editor
Steven J. McMichael
University of St. Thomas

VOLUME 4

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INTRODUCTION

> *Therefore let us also, having such a cloud of witnesses over us. . . .* Hebrews 12:1

If the truth be told, I do not believe that "Franciscan Prayer" as a specific, exclusive category of spirituality existed in the Middle Ages, or in any other age for that matter—only Franciscans at prayer. Certainly, this "cloud of witnesses" known erstwhile and today as Poor Ladies, Zocolanti, Minorites, Beguines, Observants, Damianites, Capuchins, Conventuals, and Friars Minor, along with countless unnamed, uncategorized, or forgotten individuals and groups, testify to the reality of Franciscans who pray. The essays in this volume demonstrate, however, that the variegated practices and beliefs of these men and women throughout the medieval period undermine any reification of prayer into strictly essentialist or doctrinal definitions. Theologians, of course, must speak of different spiritual charisms within ecclesial communities and historians should duly note the specific themes and cultural circumstances of particular writers; yet, there is no single, uniform Franciscan manner of prayer because there is a plurality of unique Franciscan witnesses, whose desire to live an evangelical life fostered as many individual expressions of prayer as people committed to the Poor Christ. It is first and foremost the experience of Francis of Assisi that grounds this perspective on "Franciscan Prayer."

His first biographer, Thomas of Celano, notes that Francis did not so much pray, but that he became a prayer.[1] Another writer after Thomas observed that the Poverello did not wish others to slavishly copy his actions, perhaps because they could not or would not do so.[2] Nevertheless, Francis undoubtedly wanted his brothers and sisters to pray often and everywhere. Clare, Bonaventure, Scotus, Angela, Iacopone, and many others throughout the Middle Ages scarcely differ in this desire. Each one sought to discover their identity in the presence of God, surrounded by fellow witnesses to the divine. Although none was a duplicate image of the other, "family

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[1] *2 Cel*, 95, *FAED* 2, p. 310; *Fontes*, p. 531.
[2] *AC* 61, *FAED* 2, p. 164; *Fontes*, pp. 1555–1556.

resemblances" emerged among those who were inspired to pray and follow the Gospel life within the Franciscan communities that quickly spread throughout Europe and beyond.[3] These resemblances or similarities have not escaped the notice of those writers, both medieval and modern, who identified certain spiritual features prominent in a "family" such as the Franciscans and less perceptible among religious "families" like the Dominicans, Benedictines, Cistercians and others. Already in the thirteenth century Bonaventure remarked that while the Franciscans were drawn first to contemplation and then study, their mendicant brothers, the Dominicans turned first to academic labor and then spiritual speculation.[4] Later day theologians have sketched the familial similarities of Franciscans with the broad strokes of interiority, affectivity, and individuality as opposed to an evident emphasis on exteriority, rationality, and traditional community life among the Dominicans.[5] While a certain family provenance is undeniable and identifiable in religious communities such as the Franciscans and Dominicans in the Middle Ages, a careful consideration of Franciscan men and women reveals that they, too, were intensely devoted to external action, often particularly fond of intellectual endeavors, and continually drawn to life together in homes, convents and hermitages.

But who were these people, and how did they pray? The authors of this present volume render readers a great service by examining a broad spectrum of Franciscans at prayer. These scholarly contributions are divided into five sections, so as to underscore resemblances and points of convergence without suggesting an exhaustive, singular narrative.

The first section, *Early Witnesses*, commences with an essay by Michael Blastic, "Prayer in the Writings of Francis of Assisi and the Early Brothers." Blastic situates the Poverello within the quotidian of thirteenth century Umbria and, through a careful consideration

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[3] Ludwig Wittgenstein speaks of "Familienähnlichkeiten" or "family-resemblances" as "a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing; sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail" in *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscome (Oxford, 2002) ns. 66–67, pp. 27–28. On Wittgenstein's family-resemblance concepts and the definition of religious categories, see John Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion* (New Haven, 1992), pp. 3–5.

[4] *Hex* 22.21 (5.440b).

[5] See the section "Minorite Prayer and Parisian Theology" in the essay "The Prothemes of Bonaventure's *Sermones dominicales* and Minorite Prayer" in this volume.

of the first Franciscan prayer texts and the social dynamics proper to family and home, demonstrates that any attempt to understand Francis of Assisi at prayer must take into consideration the symbiotic relationship between the fraternal form of life and how the brothers prayed. Ilia Delio's "Clare of Assisi and the Mysticism of Motherhood" reads the writings and early hagiographical accounts of the Assisi noblewoman from the perspective of thirteenth century evangelical movements and the rise of vernacular theology. As Delio notes, Clare's appeal to maternal imagery and the affective gestures of gazing and embracing, promote prayer as a birthing process, whereby Christ takes flesh in the life of believers. J.A. Wayne Hellmann's contribution, "Prayer in the *Life of Saint Francis* by Thomas of Celano," focuses on the earliest hagiographical account of Francis of Assisi. Hellmann's treatment of Celano's ecclesiastical, yet intimately fraternal interpretation of Francis at prayer uncovers a fourfold structure of conversion, mission, transformation, and glory, which is paradigmatic for the Gospel life of the brothers.

The juxtaposition of reasoned intellectual endeavors and prayer among Franciscans is the basis for the second section, *Contemplation and the Academy*. My essay, "The Prothemes of Bonaventure's *Sermones dominicales* and Minorite Prayer," examines the fundamental role of prayer in Franciscan evangelization articulated by the Parisian professor and pastor, Bonaventure of Bagnoregio. His artful construction of the prothemes, common to thirteenth century sermons, displays how those formed by theological study are transformed into impassioned preachers through the performance of public prayer. Jay M. Hammond's "Contemplation and the Formation of the *vir spiritualis* in Bonaventure's *Collationes in Hexaemeron*" outlines and clarifies the Seraphic Doctor's strategy of reflexive reading found in the magisterial, albeit incomplete, sermon series offered to his Parisian confreres. Following Hammond's analysis, the polemical controversy surrounding the reception of Aristotle at the University of Paris serves as a pedagogical opportunity, in which Bonaventure instructs the *viri spirituales* entrusted to him in the practice of contemplative prayer. While John Duns Scotus and Bonaventure lay claim to a common religious provenance evident in their theorization of prayer, Mary Beth Ingham uncovers the striking difference between these Franciscan academicians in "*Fides quaerens intellectum*: John Duns Scotus, Philosophy and Prayer." Ingham's comparative study highlights how the journey of prayer in Scotus's *Tractatus de Primo Principio*, in contrast to

the Augustinian-Bonaventurian model, is a preeminently rational, interpersonal dialogue between creature and Creator that is grounded in the reality of contingent order, and marked by the affirmative language of praise.

The rich diversity, creative expressions and broad contours of prayer among Franciscans throughout medieval culture emerge in the third section, *Mysticism, Orthodoxy, and Polemics*. In "Angela of Foligno's Spiral Pattern of Prayer," Diane V. Tomkinson elucidates the uniquely relational approach to prayer of the Umbrian penitent found in the *Memorial*. Although the Latin text composed by Angela's male confessor from her vernacular accounts evinces a linear, sequential mode of exposition common to hierarchical theologies of ascent, Tomkinson underlines the interdependent, inclusive, ever-expanding concentric nature of Angela's Trinitarian mysticism. Another imaginative Italian mystic is the subject of Alessandro Vettori's "Singing with Angels: Iacopone da Todi's Prayerful Rhetoric." While Iacopone's vernacular poetry demonstrates he was no stranger to polemical controversy, his *Laude* also encompass a wide variety of prayers ranging from petitionary exclamations to dialogical exchanges suitable for theatrical presentation and audience interaction. Vettori notes, in particular, how Iacopone's poetical, prayerful rhetoric overflows not into an apophatic silence, but into the melodious, harmonious song of pre-lapsarian humanity, chanted anew by Francis of Assisi in a world recreated by divine favor. In her essay, "Just talking about God: Orthodox Prayer among Heretical Beguines," Louisa A. Burnham first looks beyond Italy to communities of men and women linked to the Beguines, before returning to Todi and Assisi to examine the intriguing extant manuscripts that exemplify their textual traditions and spirituality. Burnham cautions those who are quick to draw clear lines of demarcation between orthodoxy and heresy—be they inquisitors or historians—since the Franciscans she studies appear to be opaque exemplars of creedal orthodoxy, yet transparent witnesses to the spirit of God. Questions of orthodoxy and heresy, controversy and prayer coalesce and intersect the Abrahamic religions in Steven J. McMichael's "Friar Alonso de Spina, Prayer, and Medieval Jewish, Muslim and Christian Polemical Literature." As McMichael shows, monotheistic communities considered prayer a privileged venue to malign and even demonize the other, as they praised and appealed to their common Creator. Franciscans like Alonso were not immune to this temptation despite Francis of Assisi's willingness to promote a form of *convivencia* among peoples of faith.

While Francis and his followers crisscrossed Europe and lands beyond to proclaim the Gospel, they indicated, through their writings, building projects, and artistry, a predilection for permanent locales where they, like their ancestors in faith, hoped to encounter the divine in the company of one another. The fourth section, *Portals to the Sacred*, takes up this intense Franciscan interest in the spatial dynamic of prayer that is paradoxically accentuated by the peripatetic impulse of the early brothers. Jean François Godet-Calogeras analyzes the language and the experience behind the carefully crafted words of these first witnesses in the *Rule for Hermitages*. Godet-Calogeras's essay, "*Illi qui volunt religiose stare in eremis*: Eremitical Practice in the Life of the Early Franciscans," places the brothers at the crossroads of action and contemplation, where their communal longing for God's justice is cultivated in secluded places that remain, nevertheless, within earshot of the world's concerns. While shifting attention away from the countryside to the city, Amanda D. Quantz also links prayer and ministry in "At Prayer in the Shadow of the *Tree of Life*." Quantz goes inside the refectory in the Florentine convent of Santa Croce to illustrate how the narrative fresco of Bonaventure's Christological meditation functions as a reminder of Franciscan institutional identity and a summons to Christ-centered ministry beyond the cloister walls. Amy Neff's contribution, "Byzantine Icons, Franciscan Prayer: Images of Intercession and Ascent in the Upper Church of San Francesco, Assisi," illuminates the central *Deesis* vault within the sacred pilgrim space dedicated to the Poverello. Blending narrative and images, Neff demonstrates how religious and laity alike would be drawn into the salvific descent and ascent of Christ and, gazing upward, be caught up in the intercessory prayer of the stigmatized Francis in the company of the Virgin Mary.

The final section, *Traditions in Time*, concerns the liturgical worship of early witnesses as well as the pedagogical strategies and prayer practices of Franciscans from the beginning to the threshold of the modern era. Beginning with a foundational study entitled "Franciscan Liturgical Prayer," Edward Foley identifies the twofold focus on the Eucharist and the Divine Office that marks Francis of Assisi's approach to ecclesial prayer, and sketches out the development of his liturgical insights among his first and second generation brothers. Of particular interest according to Foley is the fourth Minister General, Haymo of Faversham, whose legislative acumen transformed a religious movement that initially displayed scant interest in a fixed liturgical regime into a major arbitrator of the Roman Rite. Institutional

concern with the praxis of prayer, both personal and liturgical, fostered an intense interest in spiritual pedagogy according to Bert Roest. In his wide-ranging study, "The Discipline of the Heart: Pedagogies of Prayer in Medieval Franciscan Works of Religious Instruction," Roest follows the textual testimony of male and female communities in the Low Countries, Germany, and Spain through the centuries as they develop educational strategies promoting the conceptualization and interiorization of prayer that mirror their self-understanding as Franciscans. William J. Short examines prayer and the climate of fear during the turbulent era of Reformation Europe in "From Contemplation to Inquisition: The Franciscan Practice of Recollection in Sixteenth Century Spain." Drawing particularly on the writings of three prominent Iberian Franciscans, Bernabé de Palma, Francisco de Osuna, and Bernardino de Laredo, Short underscores the richness of the Franciscan contemplative tradition that ultimately fell victim to the suspicions of ecclesiastical authorities.

Whether we find them in the Reformation period, the decade surrounding the Fourth Lateran Council, or somewhere during the intervening centuries, medieval Franciscans witness to a vibrant spirituality characterized by myriad expressions of prayer. Ranging from quiet whispers in eremitical solitude to poetic praise on urban theater stages, their prayer is intimately tied to the cultures surrounding them and the religious communities within which they lived and died. In a masterly fashion, the authors who contributed to this volume have sketched out the many striking features of these Franciscans at prayer. Essay after essay uncovers the unique perspectives, practices and shared characteristics of these fascinating men and women. This depiction is compelling, but of course, somewhat incomplete. Just as family portraits are determined not merely by the artistry of the painter, but by which family members appear for the sitting, so too, there are still other Franciscans whose experiences are yet to be revealed. Nevertheless, this volume succeeds in providing far more than a fleeting glimpse or snapshot; the depth and breath of the studies allow readers to gaze intently and linger over the images of Franciscans at prayer.

Simply put, I delighted in the opportunity to collaborate with the scholars represented in this volume and wish to acknowledge my appreciation. Their empathetic insights, mastery of sources, and analytical capabilities are evident with every turn of the page. Many thanks go to Steven J. McMichael in particular, who demonstrated

he is not only a trusted friend through the journey of life, but also a wonderful colleague and general editor. I owe a debt of thanks to Jean François Godet-Calogeras, whose generosity and keen eye were invaluable in the final stages of this project. I am grateful for the calm, professional expertise of Julian Diehl and Marcella Mulder from Brill Academic, who have guided the text from inception onward. The completion of this project would have been undoubtedly delayed had I not been granted a sabbatical in the fall of 2006. For this reason, I extend a warm word of thanks to William T. Abare, Jr., President of Flagler College and Father Michael Cusato, Director of the Franciscan Institute. In the end, the Franciscan insistence on the interpersonal dimensions of prayer is confirmed by my wife and favorite Franciscan witness, Agnieszka. More than anyone else, she has shown me the difference between praying and becoming a prayer. My efforts here are dedicated to her.

Timothy J. Johnson
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EDITORIAL NOTE

Unless otherwise noted, references to the primary sources for the writings and life of Francis of Assisi are taken from Kajetan Esser, *Die Opuscula des hl. Franziskus von Assisi*, 2nd edition by Engelbert Grau (Grottaferrata, 1989), hereafter *Opuscula*, or from *Fontes Franciscani*, eds. Enrico Menestò and Stefano Brufani (Assisi, 1995), hereafter *Fontes*. Title abbreviations and English translations of these texts, unless indicated otherwise, are found in *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, eds. Regis J. Armstrong, J.A. Wayne Hellmann and William J. Short, *The Saint*, vol. 1 (New York, 1999), hereafter *FAED* 1; *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, eds. idem, *The Founder*, vol. 2 (New York, 2000), hereafter *FAED* 2; and *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, eds. idem, *The Prophet*, vol. 3 (New York, 2001), hereafter *FAED* 3. References to the writings of Bonaventure, unless noted otherwise, come from *Doctoris Seraphici S. Bonaventurae opera omnia*, 10 volumes. (Quaracchi, 1882–1902), and give volume and page numbers in parentheses. Abbreviations of Bonaventure's texts from the *Opera Omnia* are adapted from Jacques Guy Bougerol, ed. *Lexique Saint Bonaventure* (Paris, 1969) or specifically noted.

EARLY WITNESSES

PRAYER IN THE WRITINGS OF FRANCIS OF ASSISI AND THE EARLY BROTHERS

Michael W. Blastic

The patristic formula *lex credendi lex orandi*, "the law of believing is the law of praying," is well established by scholars of the early Church as demonstrating the mutual relationship between faith and prayer in that prayer expresses what is believed, and what is believed is expressed in prayer.[1] One can expand on this conviction with another formula, "*forma vivendi forma orandi*," which suggests the mutual relationship between life and prayer, that is the pattern and meaning of one's life is articulated in the form of one's prayer, and vice versa. This has been the case from early on in the Church because faith impacts life as well as prayer. One can see this relationship expressed in the history of monasticism where every reform of monastic life and rule implied at the same time a reform in monastic prayer.

The early Franciscan Writings, identified as Francis's *Opuscula*, witness to this connection between life and prayer. Among these writings of Francis and the early brothers, one can identify approximately twenty prayers either as freestanding texts or as parts of larger texts.[2] These prayers are an integral part of the vision of life articulated by Francis and the early brothers, and cannot be separated from the context of the *forma vitae*. As expressions of praise, thanksgiving and adoration of the God who calls forth this life and prayer

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[1] While there is some debate concerning the origin of the phrase, it is generally attributed to Prosper of Aquitaine. See *Bishops Committee on the Liturgy Newsletter*, December 1980, pp. 237, 239. For a theological interpretation of the axiom consult, Edward J. Kilmartin, *The Eucharist in the West: History and Theology*, ed. Robert J. Daly (Collegeville, 1998), pp. 343–352.

[2] The total number of prayers depends on how one determines separate texts given that the *Office of the Passion* contains a number of prayers that are often counted separately. For example, Leonhard Lehmann studies fourteen prayers in *Francesco, maestro di preghiera* (Rome, 1993). Jay M. Hammond lists twenty prayers in "Saint Francis's Doxological Mysticism in Light of His Prayers," in *Francis of Assisi: History, Hagiography and Hermeneutics in the Early Documents*, ed. Jay M. Hammond (New York, 2004), n. 9, p. 108.

response from the brothers, these prayers witness to an essential and integral dimension of the very praxis of Franciscan life itself as praise.

This essay will demonstrate the symbiotic relationship between the Franciscan form of life and the Franciscan form of prayer as that appears in these early writings. First, the texts will be analyzed to demonstrate that the Franciscan matrix of prayer is the life itself of the brothers. Then, the meaning of both prayer and life as praise as it emerges in these texts will be developed. Finally, the language and content of Franciscan prayer will be analyzed by focusing on two psalms from the *Office of the Passion* and the *Canticle of Creatures*.

The Early Franciscan Writings[3]

In his critical edition of the early Franciscan Writings, Kajetan Esser adopted the term *opuscula* to characterize these texts attributed to Francis of Assisi, a term which identifies "brief literary works," as first adopted by Luke Wadding in the seventeenth century.[4] Esser defined these works as "both those which Francis fixed in writing and those he had written down through dictation," implying the direct and immediate authorship of Francis for all the texts included in the edition.[5] Esser went on to distinguish between authentic writings of Francis and original writings of Francis. He noted that by accepting only original texts of Francis as authentic one would be left with very few texts because "Francis, in fact, not only used a secretary in composing them, but as he himself said, he also used the counsel of the brothers."[6] Here, Esser made a significant but often overlooked point, and that is that the *Opuscula b. Francisci* represent not the sole work of Francis but rather the collective work of Francis and the early brothers. While the collaboration of the brotherhood (and others)[7] can be seen most clearly in the texts of both

[3] Throughout this essay what has been traditionally called the Writings of Francis, will be referred to as the Early Franciscan Writings, or simply the Writings. The reason for this is explained in this section of the essay.

[4] *Opuscula*, p. 6.

[5] *Opuscula*, p. 7.

[6] *Opuscula*, p. 7.

[7] The Roman Curia represented by Cardinal Hugolino was involved in the redaction of the *Later Rule*, or *Rule of 1223*, which received papal approval by Honorius III on November 29, 1223.

the early and later Rules, nonetheless all the texts included in the *Opuscula* reflect the life and work of the brothers.[8] With the exception of the *Prayer before the Crucifix*, all the Writings were produced after Francis had received brothers. These Writings then articulate and reflect the life and behavior of the early brotherhood as it developed around Francis from the moment that God gave him brothers two to three years after his conversion in 1206, until his death on the evening of October 3, 1226.

In light of this, it is interesting to note that there are only two explicit prayers of petition in this collection of texts. The first and only one which is voiced in the first person singular is the *Prayer before the Crucifix* where Francis prays for guidance for himself during the early moments of his conversion.[9] The second prayer of petition is voiced in the first person plural and appears as the conclusion of the *Letter to the Entire Order* requesting that the brothers may have the grace to follow in the footprints of Jesus.[10] All other prayer texts in the collection are presented in the first person plural, thus indicating a common voice or the voice of the brotherhood at work. This is not to diminish the role of Francis in the articulation of the texts, but merely to underline the voice of the brotherhood represented in the texts. Given the nature of the Writings then, the prayers must be situated in the life of the brotherhood and must be approached as the voice of the brotherhood at prayer.

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[8] David Flood, "Read it at Chapter: Francis of Assisi and the *Scritti*," *Franciscan Studies* 60 (2002), pp. 341–357. Consult also Michael Cusato who argues for the collaboration of Caesar of Speyer, "An Unexplored Influence on the *Epistola ad fideles* of Francis of Assisi: The *Epistola universis Christi fidelibus* of Joachim of Fiore," *Franciscan Studies* 61 (2003), pp. 253–278.

[9] Esser edited the critical text of this prayer in Latin, and commented that while vernacular editions existed it was impossible to edit a critical edition of the Italian version (*Opuscula*, p. 356). Carlo Paolazzi in the recent Latin-Italian edition of the Writings presents a critical edition of the Italian text: "[1] Altissimo, glorioso Dio, illumina le tenebre de lo core mio. [2] E damme fede dritta, speranza certa e caritade perfetta, senno e cognoscemento, Signore, [3] che faccia lo tuo santo e verace comandamento. Amen." *Francesco d'Assisi: Scritti.* Testo latino e traduzione italiana, ed. Aristide Cabassi (Padua, 2002), p. 227. This version of the texts will be referred to in the future as *Scritti.*

[10] *Letter to the Entire Order* 50–52, *FAED* 1, pp. 120–121; *Opuscula*, p. 263.

The Franciscan Form of Life

The text of the *Earlier Rule* is the foundational text for understanding the Franciscan *forma vitae*, or form of life. In this text the life of the brothers is described as a life lived following "the teaching and footprints of our Lord Jesus Christ," a choice which resulted in their separation from the world of Assisi and its values.[11] Moved by the conversion, example and life of Francis who "left the world" in response to God's action which led him to the lepers, brothers joined him in establishing an alternative way of life to both that of the Commune of Assisi, as well as to monastic forms of life existing in the Church of that time.[12] The *Earlier Rule* describes the conditions for entrance into this way of life with the decision to "sell all his belongings and be conscientious in giving everything to the poor."[13] There follows in this Rule a description of the relation between the ministers and the brothers,[14] a description of the brothers' presence

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[11] *Earlier Rule* 1.1, *FAED* 1, pp. 63–64; *Opuscula*, pp. 377–378, "et Domini nostri Jesu Christi doctrinam et vestigia sequi . . ." For a detailed and critical analysis of this fundamental text, consult David Flood, *Francis of Assisi and the Franciscan Movement* (Quezon City, 1989). The *Earlier Rule* is a text that grew with the brotherhood and represents the text as redacted in 1221. It is also referred to as the *Rule of 1221*, and the *Regula non bullata*.

[12] Francis describes his conversion and the change of location in his own words: "The Lord gave me, Brother Francis, thus to begin doing penance in this way: for when I was in sin, it seemed too bitter for me to see lepers. And the Lord Himself led me among them and I showed mercy to them. And when I left them, what had seemed bitter to me was turned into sweetness of soul and body. And afterwards I delayed a little and left the world," *Testament* 1–3, *FAED* 1, p. 124; *Opuscula*, p. 438. For an analysis of the *Testament* consult, Felice Accrocca, "Il Testamento di Francesco: l'eredità di un'immagine," in idem, *Francesco e le sue immagini. Momenti della evoluzione della coscienza storica dei frati Minori (secoli XIII–XVI)* (Padua, 1997), pp. 15–35. Accrocca's analysis of the *Earlier Rule* reflects his analysis of Francis's *Testament* in terms of the centrality of "marginality" to the *forma vitae*. Consult Felice Accrocca and Antonio Ciceri, *Francesco e I suoi frati* (Milan, 1998), pp. 19–31. This attention to social location connects well with recent scholarship on the role of location in spirituality. Consult Philip Sheldrake, "Christian Spirituality as a Way of Living Publicly: A Dialectic of the Mystical and Prophetic," *Spiritus* 3:1 (2003), pp. 19–37; idem, *Spaces for the Sacred: Place, Memory and Identity* (London, 2001).

[13] *Earlier Rule* 2.4, *FAED* 1, p. 64; *Opuscula*, p. 278: "omnia sua vendat et ea omnia pauperibus studeat erogare."

[14] *Earlier Rule* 4–6, *FAED* 1, pp. 66–68; *Opuscula*, pp. 380–382. Much of the contents of these chapters evolved with the experience of the brotherhood, and one can see a reflection of the division and structuring of the movement into provinces in 1217 here. For an overview of the structure, development and dating of the *Earlier Rule* consult David Flood and Thaddée Matura, *The Birth of a Movement* (Chicago, 1975).

in the world and their manner of working,[15] and finally the description of their religious mission in the world and its consequences in terms of the choices they are called to constantly reaffirm.[16] In these chapters the brothers are described as a group of men who live the Gospel by being itinerant agents of peace in their world as well as in and to the world of the Saracens and other nonbelievers. They support themselves through manual labor by taking only what is necessary for the day for themselves and their sick brothers as well as for the needs of other poor people, and especially the lepers. Their work brings the brothers into contact with people who recognize them socially as "lesser brothers,"[17] that is, as men who have chosen to reject the social ethos of Assisi through their refusal of ownership, through their lack of fixed dwellings, through their poor dress, and through their association with "the poor and the powerless, the sick and the lepers, and the beggars by the wayside."[18]

Within this broad description of their life, prayer is spoken of first in terms of fasting and the divine office as foundational for the life of the brothers. The *Earlier Rule* states that "all the brothers, whether clerical or lay, recite the divine office, the praises and the prayers, as is required of them,"[19] specifying that the office should be celebrated according to the custom of the clerics for all those brothers who can read, whether clerical or lay.[20] The "praises and prayers" that are mentioned probably refer to the devotional prayers and offices that Francis and the brothers had adopted by custom.[21]

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[15] *Earlier Rule* 7–13; *Opuscula*, pp. 383–389.

[16] *Earlier Rule* 14–17; *Opuscula*, pp. 389–393. The remaining chapters of the text contain additions to the basic document implementing specific decrees of Lateran IV, and other texts that were attached to the Rule as it was disseminated.

[17] "Let no one be called prior, but let everyone in general be called a lesser brother," *Earlier Rule* 6.3, *FAED* 1, p. 68; *Opuscula*, p. 382: "Et nullus vocetur prior, sed generaliter omnes vocentur fratres minores."

[18] *Earlier Rule* 9.2, *FAED* 1, p. 70; *Opuscula*, p. 385: "inter viles et despectas personas, inter pauperes et debiles et infirmos et leprosos et iuxta viam mendicantes." On the early Franciscan movement as a social organization and its implications see the works of David Flood, especially, "Franciscans at Work," *Franciscan Studies* 59 (2001), pp. 21–62. An earlier development of this approach can be found in David Flood, *Work for Everyone: Francis of Assisi and the Ethic of Service* (Quezon City, 1997).

[19] *Earlier Rule* 3.3, *FAED* 1, p. 65; *Opuscula*, p. 379.

[20] *Earlier Rule* 3.4, 8–9, *FAED* 1, pp. 65–66; *Opuscula*, pp. 379–380.

[21] Among the Writings is the *Office of the Passion*, a devotional office that was prayed daily after each of the seven canonical hours. It was composed of prayers, antiphons and psalms composed by Francis. The instruction for the recitation of this office is contained in the first rubric, and provides the following order for

Recitation of the divine office according the custom of the Roman Church is experienced as an expression of the Catholicity of the lesser brothers, and hence foundational for their life.[22]

The *Earlier Rule* does not regulate participation at Mass except for the reminder that the brothers are to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord with "great humility and respect" after having confessed their sins.[23] This prescription of the Rule implements canon twenty-one of Lateran IV, which imposed the obligation of annual confession and communion on all the faithful.[24] Nothing more is said concerning the frequency of attending Mass and the assumption is that the brothers' practice reflected that of the other lay men and women of their day. The *Letter to the Entire Order*, written not long before Francis's death in October of 1226, reflects a changed situation within the brotherhood, in that now the brothers have places of their own, and there is seemingly a larger number of priest-brothers in the fraternity. In this changed context issues with the celebration of the Mass arose, and in this situation Francis admonishes and exhorts his brothers, "to celebrate only one Mass a day according to the rite of the Holy Church in those places where the brothers dwell. But if there is more than one priest there, let the other be content, for the love of charity, at hearing the celebration of the other priest. . . ."[25] The Writings do contain numerous texts which reflect on the meaning and role of the Body and Blood of

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prayer: the Our Father; the *Praises at every Hour*; the *Antiphon Holy Mary*; the psalms of Saint Mary, other chosen psalms followed by the psalms of the Passion; the antiphon Holy Virgin Mary is repeated at the end of the office. The *Office of the Passion* can be found in the *FAED* 1, pp. 139–160, with the rubric found on p. 139; *Opuscula*, pp. 338–351. Note that among the Writings is a *Prayer Inspired by the Our Father* and the *Praises to be Said at all the Hours* included separately from the *Office of the Passion*. It is also important to note that reference to the "praises and prayers" is not found in the *Later Rule* 3, which describes the prayer and fasting of the brothers in 1223. See the *Later Rule* 3.1–3, *FAED* 1, p. 101; *Opuscula*, pp. 367–368.

[22] See *Letter to the Entire Order* 44–46 and *Testament* 30–33 in *FAED* 1, p. 120 and pp. 126–127 and *Opuscula*, pp. 263 and 442–443 respectively.

[23] *Earlier Rule* 21, *FAED* 1, p. 78; *Opuscula*, p. 394.

[24] See footnote b, on p. 77 of *FAED* 1.

[25] *Letter to the Entire Order* 30–31, *FAED* 1, p. 119; *Opuscula*, p. 261: "ut in locis, in quibus fratres morantur, una tantum missa celebretur in die secundum formam sanctae Ecclesiae. Si vero plures in loco fuerint sacerdotes, sit per amorem caritatis alter contentus auditu celebrationis alterius sacerdotis." This letter is dated among the last of the Writings chronologically, and hence between late 1225 and winter of 1226.

the Lord in the life of the fraternity.[26] But, while participation at Mass was a regular part of the brothers' life, the Writings do not provide any description or reflection on the role of liturgical prayer as such, except to underline a central role for the divine office according to the Roman Church in the life of the brothers.

It was primarily through the divine office that Francis and the brothers had a direct connection to the sacred scriptures and writings of the Fathers of the Church, thus providing an essential contact with the primary sources for the life of the Franciscan movement.[27] In a later chapter of the *Earlier Rule*, the brothers are admonished to keep the Word of God in the heart. Here, following a concordant paraphrase of the parable of the sower from each of the three synoptic gospels, the Rule describes the work of Satan who "wants to ensnare a person's heart under the guise of some reward or assistance, to choke out the word and precepts of the Lord from our memory, and desiring a person's heart, [he wants] to blind it through worldly affairs and concerns and to live there. . . ."[28] This suggests that the brothers' struggled with remaining faithful to their purpose of following the footprints of Jesus rather than turning back to the

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[26] *Letter to the Entire Order* 26–29, *FAED* 1, p. 118: *Opuscula*, p. 261; *Later Admonition and Exhortation* 6–7, *FAED* 1, p. 45; *Opuscula*, p. 208; *Admonition* 1, *FAED* 1, pp. 128–129; *Opuscula*, pp. 106–107.

[27] Carlo Paolazzi has suggested how scripture texts formed the backbone for much of the thought expressed in the Writings. Consult his *Lettura degli "Scritti" di Francsco d'Assisi*, Second edition (Milan, 2002); idem, *Il Cantico di frate Sole* (Genoa, 1992); idem, *Francesco in cammino: Testimonianza Cristiana e "Lodi di Dio Altissimo"* (Villa Verucchio, 2003). Recently, attention has also been given to the Breviary of Francis and its contents. See the work of Pietro Messa, *Le fonti patristiche negli scritti di Francesco di Assisi* (Assisi, 1999), pp. 167–204. Messa has more recently edited parts of the breviary: "I sermoni di Innocenzo III nel *Breviarum sancti Francisci*," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 95 (2002), pp. 249–265; "L'*Officium mortuorum* e l'*Officium beate Marie virginis* nel *Breviarium sancti Francisci*," *Franciscana* 4 (2002), pp. 111–147; and "*Beatus Franciscus acquisivit hoc breviarium*: Proprium de tempore. Adventus," in *Domini vestigia sequi*. Miscellanea offerta a Padre Giovani M. Boccali, OFM (Assisi, 2003), pp. 133–179. In addition to the editions of Messa, Antonio Ciceri has studied and edited the biblical sources of the Writings in the following works: "Prolegomeni attorno al problema dell'originalità degli *Opuscula sancti Francisci Assisiensis*," *Vita minorum* 40:1 (2000), pp. 13–34; "Prologomeni attorno al problema dell'originalità degli *Opuscula sancti Francisci Assisiensis*," *Frate Francesco* 68:1 (2002), pp. 5–109; "La fonte evangelica degli *Opuscula b. Francisci Assisiensis*," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 88 (1995), pp. 161–268; "*Hoc evangelistare fecit scribi*," in *Revirescunt chartae codices documenta textus*. Miscellanea in honorem Fr. Caesaris Cenci, OFM, eds. Alvaro Cacciotti and Pacifico Sella (Rome, 2002), pp. 707–854.

[28] *Earlier Rule* 22.20, *FAED* 1, p. 80; *Opuscula*, p. 396: "Et circuiens desiderat cor hominis sub specie alicuius mercedis vel adiutorii tollere et suffocare verbum et praecepta Domini a memoria et volens cor hominis per saecularia negotia et curam excaecare et ibi habitare. . . ."

ethos and world of Assisi. In this context David Flood commented that, "Their prayer kept their minds from becoming entangled in the world. It withdrew their inchoate self from the press of society and kept it subject to God's action in the world."[29]

Chapter seventeen of the *Earlier Rule* takes up this issue in terms of the struggle to replace the spirit of the flesh with the spirit of the Lord. The "wisdom of the world and the prudence of the flesh" is contrasted with "humility and patience, the pure, simple and true peace of the spirit."[30] The spirit of the flesh lives from the outside and seeks only the recognition of others, as the text states, "The spirit of the flesh very much desires and strives to have the words but cares little for the activity" while "the spirit of the Lord, however, wants the flesh to be mortified and looked down upon, considered of little worth and rejected."[31] In short, the spirit of the Lord is the spirit that enlivened Jesus especially in the more tragic dimension of his life, the passion and crucifixion. It is the spirit of the Lord that focused the brothers on God's action in the world. The spirit of the Lord is the spirit that maintains fidelity to one's purpose, and like Jesus Christ, makes one vulnerable in this world. This contrast between outward appearance and inner reality is one which characterizes two forms of life, that is the form of life of the Commune of Assisi with its values of power and comfort, as opposed to the form of life of the Gospel with its focus on God as the source of humility, patience and peace.[32] The reason for the brothers' insistence on keeping the Word of God in one's heart is for the purpose of remaining faithful in the midst of this struggle.

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[29] David Flood, *Francis and the Franciscan Movement*, p. 144. In this context the *Rule for Hermitages* must be situated as a strategy in the struggle not to be reabsorbed by the values of the world. Consult David Flood, "On Saying Prime at the Proper Hour," *Haversack* 2:2 (1978), 1–11. See also the article on the Hermitage in this volume.

[30] *Earlier Rule* 17.10, 15, *FAED* 1, pp. 75–76; *Opuscula*, p. 392: "[10] Omnes ergo fratres caveamus ab omni superbia et vana gloria; et custodiamus nos a sapientia huius mundi et a prudentia carnis (Rom 8:6)." "[15] Et studet ad humilitatem et patientiam et puram et simplicem et veram pacem spiritus."

[31] *Earlier Rule* 17.11, 14, *FAED* 1, p. 75; *Opuscula*, p. 392: "[11] [S]piritus enim carnis vult et studet multum ad verba habenda, sed parum ad operationem . . ." [14] "Spiritus autem Domini vult mortificatam et despectam, vilem et abiectam esse carnem."

[32] For the social context of Assisi rejected by the brothers, consult David Flood, *Francis of Assisi and the Franciscan Movement*, pp. 10–17.

Following this description of this struggle that the brothers' are engaged in, the *Earlier Rule* concludes with a prayer of praise:

> [17] Let us give back every good to the Lord, God Almighty and Most High, acknowledge that all goods are His, and refer thanks to Him, from Whom every good comes, for everything. [18] May He, the Almighty and Most High, the only true God, have, be given back, and receive all honor and respect, all praise and blessing, all thanks and glory, to Whom every good belongs, He Who alone is good. [19] When we see or hear evil spoken or done or God blasphemed, let us bless and do good and praise God Who is blessed forever.[33] [Amen.]

This prayer summarizes the life of the brothers as a response to the good things God provides. The brothers pray that they would "give back" (*reddamus*) what belongs to God, that they would "recognize" (*cognoscamus*) that every good belongs to God, and that they would "give thanks" (*gratias referamus*) to God from whom all goods come. The goods spoken of here are the goods of this world, the concrete, material goods provided in creation and hence the goods that ultimately belong to God. The prayer describes the life of the brothers as a life of giving back to God rather than taking for oneself. It calls on the brothers to let the action of their living, the expression of their brotherhood, and their presence and engagement with men and women and the world, create an awareness, a consciousness of this truth of life in them and others. The truth is that everything belongs to God, and that giving thanks to God implies giving back to God through a lifestyle that respects the goods of creation as God's property. This prayer then summarizes the entire narrative of the brothers' life as presented in the first seventeen chapters of the *Earlier Rule*, and in doing so connects the brothers' prayer with their life and behavior. To give praise to God as a Franciscan means both to recognize God as the source of all good things, and to live a life that actually gives back these good things to God, their source.

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[33] *Earlier Rule* 17.17–19; my translation; *Opuscula*, pp. 392–393: "Et omnia bona Domino Deo altissimo et summo reddamus et omnia bona ipsius esse cognoscamus et de omnibus ei gratias referamus, a quo bona cuncta procedunt. Et ipse altissimus et summus, solus verus Deus habeat et ei reddantur et ipse recipiat omnes honores et reverentias, omnes laudes et benedictiones, omnes gratias et gloriam, cuius est omne bonum, qui solus est bonus (cfr. Lk 18:19). Et quanto nos videmus vel audimus malum dicere vel facere vel blasphemare Deum, nos bene dicamus et bene faciamus et laudemus Deum (cfr. Rom 12:21), quo est benedictus in saecula (Rom 1:25)."

The Meaning of Prayer in the Writings

Given this role of prayer in Franciscan life, prayer then encompasses every dimension of the brothers' life as the following text indicates:

> [10] Therefore, let nothing hinder us, nothing separate us, nothing come between us. [11] Wherever we are, in every place, at every hour, at every time of the day, every day and continually, let all of us truly and humbly believe, hold in our heart and love, honor, adore, serve, praise and bless, glorify and exalt, magnify and give thanks to the Most High and Supreme Eternal God Trinity and Unity, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit*, Creator of all, Savior of all. . . .[34]

Chapter twenty-three of the *Earlier Rule* from which this text is taken is an invitation to all men and women to join with the lesser brothers in doing penance. In the *Testament*, Francis described his life as a life of penance beginning with his conversion that began when the Lord led him among lepers.[35] This resulted, as described above, in his leaving the world of Assisi and living together with his brothers in a way that returned all good things to God—the life described in the *Earlier Rule*.[36] In this exhortation from the *Earlier Rule* the purpose and meaning of prayer is described as a constant and integral dimension of life. It describes an experience of prayer and life with-

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[34] *Earlier Rule* 23.7, *FAED* 1, pp. 85–86; *Opuscula*, p. 401: "Nihil ergo impediat, nihil separet, nihil interpolet; ubique nos omnes omni loco, omni hora et omni tempore, quotidie et continue credamus veraciter et humiliter et in corde teneamus et amemus, honoremus, adoremus, serviamus, laudemus et benedicamus, glorificemus et superexaltemus, magnificemus et gratias agamus altissimo et summo Deo aeterno, trinitati et unitati, Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto, creatori omnium et salvatori omnium. . . ."

[35] The *Testament* is a text that comes from the last months of Francis' life, in which the early life of the brotherhood is recalled as a reminder to the brothers to remain true to what they have promised in the Rule. The text can be found in *FAED* 1, pp. 124–127.

[36] *Testament* 1–3, *FAED* 1, p. 124. For historical background to the life of penance, consult, André Vauchez, *La spiritualité du Moyen Age occidental, VIIIe–XIIIe siècle*. Second edition (Paris, 1994), pp. 95–130. He comments on p. 137, "Conformément à sa vision évangélique du royaume des Cieux qui commence à se construire ici-bas à partir d'une modeste graine, the Pauvre d'Assise a cherché avec les Frères mineurs, les Pauvres Dames de sainte Claire—qu'on appelera plus tard les clarisses—et les pénitents laïcs qui avaient suivi son appel á la conversion, un modéle religieux alternatif, dans le but de révéler aux hommes et même à l'Église—mais sans leur faire la leçon ni les agresser—ce que pourrait être un monde soustrait au pouvoir de l'argent et à la violence parce que pleinement consacré à l'adoration de Dieu et au service des pauvres."

out dichotomy, and without separating out the realms of the sacred and the secular. There is one world that is willed by God and it is blessed with the good things God has given for all to share. This world then becomes the location for prayer, the place for returning all things to God, and this is situated in the context of faith in the Trinity who acts in history as creator and savior. Prayer is rooted firmly in the ordinary activity of life in terms of love and service, and it is expressed here in terms of praise, adoration, and glory. In the previous chapter of the rule (twenty-two), the brothers are exhorted "Let us always make a home and a dwelling place there [heart] for Him who is the Lord God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit . . ."[37] The brothers thus see themselves as realizing the Gospel injunction to "pray always and not lose heart" (Lk 18:1), in this ordinary and everyday space.[38]

This characteristic of the brothers' prayer suggests a connection with the lay penitential movements of the day. In fact, The *Later Admonition and Exhortation to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance* links the penitents' practice of prayer with that of the brothers. The penitents are exhorted:

> [19] Let us love God, therefore, and adore Him with a pure heart and a pure mind, because He Who seeks this above all things has said: True adorers adore the Father in Spirit and truth (Jn 4:23). [20] For all who adore Him must adore Him in the Spirit of truth (Jn 4:24). [21] And day and night let us direct praises and prayers to Him, saying: Our Father, Who art in heaven . . . for we should pray always and not become weary (Lk 18:1).[39]

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[37] *Earlier Rule* 22.27, *FAED* 1, p. 80; *Opuscula*, p. 397: "et semper faciamus ibi habitaculum et mansionem ipsi, qui est Dominus Deus omnipotens, Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus."

[38] None of the descriptions or prescriptions with regard to prayer in the Writings suggests that the brothers must pray in churches. Given their itinerant lifestyle and lack of permanent dwellings, this would be very difficult if not impossible. This situation changed in the 1220s as evidenced in the texts of the *Later Rule* and the *Testament* with questions concerning the dwellings of the brothers. Despite the lack of prescriptions with regard to praying in churches, the *Testament* recalls that the brothers "quite willingly remained in churches" (*Testament* 18, *FAED* 1, p. 125; *Opuscula*, p. 440: "et satis libenter manebamus in ecclesiis."). In addition, Francis recounted his "faith in churches" in the same document, an aspect of his absolute conviction that it is in the Church that we have access to the concrete body and blood of Jesus Christ. See *Admonition* 1.

[39] *Later Admonition and Exhortation* 19–21, *FAED* 1, pp. 46–47; *Opuscula*, p. 209: "Diligamus igitur Deum et adoremus eum puro corde et pura mente, quia ipse super omnia quaerens dixit: Veri adoratores adorabunt patrem in spiritu et veritate

Here one can see that everyone, no matter of what status or office, is invited to address "prayer and praises"[40] to God continuously, obviously implying that one is already in the sacred space of God's presence. This text suggests that if one is faithful to all the obligations of Christian life, if one follows the example of Christ's footprints and produces worthy fruits of penance,[41] then "the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon all those men and women who have done and persevered in these things and It will make a home and dwelling place in them."[42] The text then goes on to describe this dwelling place in terms of domestic relationships, in terms of being spouses, brothers, and mothers of Jesus Christ.[43] The metaphors for relationship with God are taken from the domestic experience of life, the ordinary everyday experiences of the home and family. The experience and spaces of everyday life become the place and occasion for the praise of God.

This approach to prayer is developed in two texts found in the *Later Rule*.[44] The first text appears in the context of a discussion of

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(Jn 4:23). Omnes enim, qui adorant eum, in spiritu veritatis oportet eum adorare (Jn 4:24). Et dicamus ei laudes et orationes die ac nocte (Ps 31:4) dicendo: Pater noster, qui es in caelis (Mt 6:9), quia oportet nos semper orare et non deficere (Lk 18:1)."

[40] This is the same expression that one finds in the *Earlier Rule* 3.3, "Let all the brothers . . ., recite the Divine Office, the praises and prayers . . ." (*FAED* 1, p. 65; *Opuscula*, p. 379: "Propter hoc omnes fratres . . . faciant divinum officium, laudes et orationes . . ."). This suggests that all Christians, while not obliged to the divine office according to clerics, were encouraged to pray the devotional offices and prayers as Francis and the brothers did.

[41] See the *Later Admonition and Exhortation*, 25–47, which describes these fruits of penance in detail; *FAED* 1, pp. 47–48.

[42] *Later Admonition and Exhortation* 48, *FAED* 1, p. 48; *Opuscula*, p. 211: ". . . requiescet super eos Spiritus Domini (Is 11:2) et faciet in eis habitaculum et mansionem."

[43] *Later Admonition and Exhortation* 49–50, *FAED* 1, pp. 48–49; *Opuscula*, p. 211: "Et erunt filii Patris caelestis (Mt 5:45), cuius opera faciunt. Et sunt sponsi, fratres et matres Domini nostri Jesu Christi (Mt 12:50)." Commenting on the *Memoriale propositum* of 1221, addressed to the penitents, Catherine Vincent states, "Les extraits ci-joints montrent que la prière des pénitents est quotidienne, puisqu'elle suit l'usage monastique et canonial des Heures; elle présente un caractère à la fois domestique (le pénitent prie chez lui, notamment avant et après les repas) et communautaire (certaines Heures sont récitées à l'église); enfin, elle s'articule sur le rythme de l'année liturgique et se voit renforcée chaque mois par une célébration commune assortie d'une prédication destinée à encourager chacun à persévérer dans la voie choisie. . . . Elles sont également très proches des premiers règlements franciscains, notamment en matière de jeûne et de prière." *Prier au moyen âge*. Pratique et expériences (V^e^–XVe siècles), eds. Nicole Bériou, Jacques Berlioz, & Jean Longère (Turnhout, 1991), p. 229.

[44] The *Later Rule* was approved by Pope Honorius III on November 29, 1223, and is also referred to as the *Regula bullata*. The *Later Rule* witnesses to significant

the brothers who work, admonishing them to "not extinguish the Spirit of holy prayer and devotion to which all temporal things must contribute."[45] Here again it can be seen that the temporal order, in this case the actual experience of manual labor, should serve (*deservire*) the purpose of prayer and devotion, both of which are identified as activities of the Holy Spirit. Devotion, understood as attention to or desire for God, and prayer understood as giving back to God, should be operative even in manual labor. In other words, manual labor becomes a locus of prayer in that it allows the person to return to God what is God's. This understanding is developed in the sixteenth *Admonition* which is shaped as a commentary on the Gospel beatitude, "Blessed are the clean of heart (Mt 5:8). The truly clean of heart are those who look down upon earthly things, seek those of heaven, and with a clean heart and spirit, never cease adoring and seeing the Lord God living and true."[46] Another dimension of the response to the Gospel mandate to pray constantly (Lk 18:1) is articulated here. Earthly things give access to the things of heaven and provide the opportunity to adore the living God. This is the work of the spirit of the Lord, as the Rule text suggested, operating in a "clean heart and spirit," that is in a spirit that is not distracted by the things of the world, and whose life is a transparent witness to the ubiquitous presence of God.

In this context, a second text from the *Later Rule* places prayer in the context of the struggle between the spirit of the world and the spirit of the Lord:

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developments in the life of the brothers in terms of economic support and a focus on ecclesiastical preaching, resulting in a more settled style of existence. In addition to Francis and the brothers, the papacy had a hand in its development in the person of Cardinal Hugolino, the protector of the Order. Francis recognizes this rule as binding on the brothers in his *Testament* 35–39. For background and analysis of this text consult, Kajetan Esser, "The Definitive Rule of the Friars Minor," *Round Table of Franciscan Studies* 34 (1969), pp. 4–67; Julio Micó, "El carisma de Francisco de Asís—Comentario a la Regla Bulada de 1223," *Selecciones de Franciscanismo* 25:3 (1996), pp. 376–404; 26:2 (1997), pp. 226–241; 26:3 (1997), pp. 453–473; 27:1 (1998), pp. 379–400; 28:1 (1999), pp. 93–112.

[45] *Later Rule* 5.2, *FAED* 1, p. 102; *Opuscula*, p. 368: "sanctae orationis et devotionis spiritum non extinguant, cui debent cetera temporalia deservire." A similar exhortation can be found in a letter from Francis to Anthony of Padua in which Francis gives permission to teach theology to the brothers, "providing that, as is contained in the Rule, you 'do not extinguish the Spirit of prayer and devotion' during study of this kind" (*FAED* 1, p. 107; *Opuscula*, p. 153).

[46] *Admonition* 16, *FAED* 1, p. 134; *Opuscula*, p. 113: "Vere mundo corde sunt qui terrena despiciunt, caelestia quaerunt et semper adorare et videre Dominum Deum vivum et verum mundo corde et animo non desistunt."

> [7] Moreover, I admonish and exhort the brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ to beware of all pride, vainglory, envy and greed, of care and solicitude for the things of this world, of detraction and murmuring. Let those who are illiterate not be anxious to learn, [8] but let them pay attention to what they must desire above all else: to have the Spirit of the Lord and Its holy activity, [9] to pray always to Him with a pure heart, to have humility and patience in persecution and infirmity, [10] and to love those who persecute, rebuke and find fault with us. . . .[47]

What is being described in this text is not a struggle that takes place only in the interior life of the brothers, but rather a struggle that has a social dimension flowing from their choice to follow the Gospel. The vices to be avoided are situated in the everyday exchange of life among the brothers, and between the brothers and people they meet and with whom they work. In place of these named vices the brothers must desire the work of the Spirit which is experienced both as constant prayer with a pure heart, and as the humility and patience of Christ in suffering and persecution. So, the Spirit of the Lord makes one a vehicle for the praise and adoration of God, and the Spirit makes one vulnerable in the same way as Jesus Christ, who became vulnerable in the incarnation.[48] It is this vulnerability of Jesus Christ, this concrete expression of God in frail, weak, human flesh, that becomes the example, the footprint which all are called to follow.[49] The focus for the brothers in the passion is on Jesus who

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[47] *Later Rule* 10.7–10, *FAED* 1, p. 105; *Opuscula*, p. 370: "Moneo vero et exhortor in Domino Jesu Christo, ut caveant fratres ab omni superbia, vana gloria, invidia, avaritia (cfr. Lk 12:5), cura et sollicitudine huius saeculi (cfr. Mt 13:22), detractione et murmuratione, et non curent nescientes litteras litteras discere; sed attendant, quod super omnia desiderare debent habere Spiritum Domini et sanctam eius operationem, orare semper ad eum puro corde et habere humilitatem, patientiam in persecutione et infirmitate et diligere eos qui nos persequuntur et reprehendunt et arguunt. . . ."

[48] This approach to the incarnation can be seen in the *Later Admonition and Exhortation* vv. 4–5, *FAED* 1, p. 46: "The most high Father made known from heaven through His holy angel Gabriel this Word of the Father-so worthy, so holy, and glorious-in the womb of the holy and glorious Virgin Mary, from whose womb He received the flesh of our humanity and frailty. Though He was rich, He wished, together with the most Blessed Virgin, His mother, to choose poverty in the world beyond all else." *Opuscula*, p. 4: "Istud Verbum Patris tam dignum, tam sanctum et gloriosum nuntiavit altissimus Pater de caelo per sanctum Gabrielem angelum suum in uterum sanctae ac gloriosae virginis Mariae, ex cuius utero veram recepit carnem humanitatis et fragilitatis nostrae."

[49] *Later Exhortation and Admonition* 11–13, *FAED* 1, p. 46: "His Father's will was such that His blessed and glorious Son, Whom He gave to us and Who was born for us, should offer Himself through His own blood as a sacrifice and oblation on

gives himself back to the Father in love. Jesus returns all the Father has given him in total self-giving love. It is the Spirit who accomplishes this work in Jesus, and it is the same Spirit of the Lord that accomplishes this work in the life of the brothers, in this world. In this sense, Jesus becomes the living example in flesh and blood of praying with a "pure heart and soul." It is to this quality of prayer and life that the brothers are called by virtue of their profession of the Rule.

The Language and Content of Prayer in the Writings

The language used throughout the *Opuscula* to describe the action of prayer includes the following: honor, adore, praise, bless, glorify, exalt, and give thanks. The reality of God's presence everywhere and at all times, and the invitation to recognize and respond to this presence is what prayer expresses for Francis and the brothers, and is the motive for understanding prayer primarily as praise, blessing, honor and glory.[50] The vision of God and the world expressed in and through the Writings, and the consequent understanding of Franciscan life as response to this God and this world in this time and this place are the basis for an understanding of Franciscan prayer. An examination of specific prayer texts from the Writings

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the altar of the cross: not for Himself through Whom all things were made, but for our sins, leaving us an example that we might follow His footprints." *Opuscula*, p. 208: "Cuius Patris talis fuit voluntas, ut filius eius benedictus et gloriosus, quem dedit nobis et natus fuit pro nobis, se ipsum per proprium sanguinem suum sacrificium et hostiam in ara crucis offerret; non propter se, per quem facta sunt omnia (cfr. Jn 1:3), sed pro peccatis nostris, relinquens nobis exemplum, ut sequamur vestigia eius (cfr. 1 Pet 2:21)." This text understands the passion of Jesus primarily as the struggle of Jesus to accept and accomplish the will of the Father. The will of the Father, as this text articulates so clearly, is that the Son give himself for us—the passion is primarily the reality of God giving God's self in love without holding anything back. This is a positive understanding of the Father's will and does not stop at equating the Father's will with the brutal death of Jesus. The Father wants Jesus to be completely for others as that is God's real nature, and hence the vulnerability of the God expressed in the incarnation.

[50] The terms used in the Writings for prayer and the number of appearances for each include the following: *adoro* (20); *honor* (25); *servio* (7); *laudo* (26); *magnifico* (6); *superexalto* (12) *gratias agere* (21); *benedico* (15) *glorifico* (2). The verb *orare* appears 25 times. More traditional forms of prayer appear less frequently and seem to be almost extraneous to the vocabulary of the Writings: *contemplor* (1); *meditatio* (1); *supplico* (2); *intercedo* (2).

gives content to this understanding of prayer and suggests consistency between theory and practice.[51] Here, an analysis of the *Office of the Passion* will serve to demonstrate this.[52]

The *Office of the Passion* is a devotional prayer that includes: a) a collection of psalms, thirteen of which were freely composed of psalms, verses and New Testament insertions that personalize the text; b) an antiphon to the Blessed Virgin Mary; and c) a closing prayer. As the rubric describes, the Office was begun with a *Prayer Inspired by the Our Father*, followed by the *Praises to be Said at all the Hours*, both of which are prayers attributed to Francis.[53]

The *Prayer Inspired by the Our Father* represents a genre of prayer that has its origins in patristic commentaries on the Lord's Prayer.[54] While it clearly emerges out of a common tradition of texts, it is characterized more as a text of devotion than as an exegetical or theological commentary, and in this sense it is a real prayer. Each

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[51] General studies of the prayers in the Writings, in addition to the works of Hammond and Lehmann listed in note 2 above, include Leonhard Lehmann, *Tiefe und Weite: Der universale Grundzug in den Gebeten des Franziskus von Assisi* (Werl/Westfalen, 1984); idem, *La preghiera francescana*, Percorsi formativi, 4 (Bologna, 1999); and Carlo Paolazzi, *Lettura degli "Scritti" di Francesco d'Assisi*, Second edition (Milan, 2002), pp. 65–168. Carlo Paolazzi contributed the introduction and notes to the Writings in the recent Italian edition of *Fonti francescane: nuova edizione*, ed. Ernesto Caroli (Padua, 2004), pp. 29–217.

[52] The fundamental study is that of Laurent Gallant, *Dominus regnavit a ligno. L'Officium Passionis de saint François d'Assise* (Paris, 1978). Consult also Leonhard Lehmann, "Francis' *Office of the Passion*," *Greyfriars Review* 12:2 (1998), pp. 143–168. Jesús M. Bezunartea, "Algunos rasgos tipicos de la espiritualidad de Francisco de Asis en la primera parte del oficio de la Pasión," *Selecciones de Franciscanismo* 27:1 (1998), pp. 124–142; pp. 292–305.

[53] *FAED* 1, pp. 161–162; *Opuscula*, pp. 319–321. The English translation does not provide the rubric which introduces the prayer: "Incipiunt laudes quas ordinavit beatissimus pater noster Franciscus et dicebat ipsas ad omnes horas diei et noctis et ante officium beatae Mariae Virginis sic incipiens: *Sanctissime pater noster qui es in caelis etc.* cum *Gloria.* Deinde dicantur laudes."

[54] Recent studies on the this text include, Leonhard Lehmann, "St. Francis' Meditation on the Lord's Prayer," *Franciscan Digest* 7:2 (1997), pp. 29–56; idem, "They Kingdom Come . . .," *Greyfriars Review* 13:3 (1999), pp. 265–296; Johannes B. Freyer, "Gott, der Vater unseres Herrn Jesus Christus: Die Vision Gottvaters bei Franziskus," *Wissenschaft und Weisheit* 62:2 (1999), pp. 276–291; Pietro Messa, *Le fonti patristiche negli scritti di Francesco di Assisi* (Assisi, 2000), pp. 303–332; Giuseppe Scarpat, *Il Padre Nostro di San Francesco* (Brescia, 2000). Given its dependence on pre-existing models the scholar Jacques Cambell has questioned its authenticity in "Saint François a-t-il composé une paraphrase du Pater?," *Franziskanische Studien* 45 (1963), pp. 338–342. However, Messa and Scarpat underline both the creativity and the dependence of this prayer on some of its patristic models, concluding for its authenticity.

verse of the Lord's prayer is followed by a comment.[55] Throughout the text, familiar descriptions are present as is the dynamic of prayer consistent with the Writings. God the Father is identified as "Supreme Good, the Eternal Good, from Whom all good comes without Whom there is no good."[56] The prayer continues with the petition that God's kingdom come, expressed here in terms of a request that through God's grace one might be enabled to come into the kingdom. For that to happen, one must do the will of God which is expressed in the petition that one might love God,

> [5] . . . by exerting all our energies and affections of body and soul in the service of Your love and of nothing else; and may we love our neighbors as ourselves by drawing them all to Your love with our whole strength, by rejoicing in the good of others as in our own, by suffering with others at their misfortunes, and by giving offense to no one.[57]

Note here the affirmation of the mission of the brothers to draw all people to God by serving only God's love. The brothers are called to recognize that God is at work in the world through love, through and in a compassionate love enfleshed in Jesus Christ. Here again what is implicitly affirmed and called to mind is the choice that the brothers have made to follow Jesus who came to serve the Father's love rather than the dynamics of power and possession associated with the commune of Assisi. Prayer expresses here the commitment of the brothers to their purpose by putting into words what the brothers are doing in the world. Another dimension of the prayer is expressed in the petition which prays for forgiveness, understood here as "ineffable mercy" expressed in love of enemies: "that we may truly love our enemies because of You and we may fervently intercede for them before You, returning no one evil for evil and may we strive to help everyone in You."[58] Note how the prayer

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[55] *Prayer Inspired by the Our Father*, *FAED* 1, pp. 158–160; *Opuscula*, pp. 292–293.

[56] *Prayer Inspired by the Our Father* 2, *FAED* 1, p. 158; *Opuscula*, p. 292: "quia tu, Domine, summum bonum es, aeternum, a quo omne bonum, sine quo nullum bonum."

[57] *Prayer Inspired by the Our Father* 5, *FAED* 1, pp. 159–159; *Opuscula*, p. 292: "et ex omnibus viribus nostris omnes vires nostras et sensus animae et corporis in obsequium tui amoris et non in alio expendendo; et proximos nostros amemus sicut et nosmetipsos omnes ad amorem tuum pro viribus trahendo, de bonis aliorum sicut de nostris gaudendo et in malis compatiendo et nemini ullam offensionem dando."

[58] *Prayer Inspired by the Our Father* 7–8, *FAED* 1, p. 159; *Opuscula*, p. 295: "per

emphasizes the love of enemies with the adjective "truly"—that is, really, practically, in terms of the way the brothers live and engage with others in the world, even those who criticize and persecute them. The Son accomplishes the Father's will through the obedience of love, and here again this model is presented to the brothers in the prayer. To pray truly one must love truly—the connection between prayer and behavior comes to the fore again, and the recitation of the *Prayer Inspired by the Our Father* at each hour of the *Office of the Passion* brings to the awareness of the brothers their commitment to live the Gospel as the condition for true prayer.

According to the rubrics in the manuscripts, The *Praises to Be Said at All the Hours* follows. This prayer establishes a connection between those heavenly creatures praying in the heavenly Jerusalem, as described in chapters four and five of the book of Revelation from which the text is composed, and those brothers who are praying this devotional *Office of the Passion* in their own time and place. The *Praises* invite all of creation to praise, glorify, honor, and bless "The Lamb Who was slain."[59] The image of the crucified and risen Lord is the focus of this praise and glory. All of creation is thus invited to recognize in the crucified yet risen Lord the focal point of all this exists on the earth and above the earth. The refrain for this prayer, "And let us praise and glorify Him forever," is an invitation to the brothers to keep always before their eyes the image of the God they follow, by joining in praise of the Lamb who was slain as they pray the *Office of the Passion*.

The *Praises* concludes with the prayer,

> [11] All-powerful, most holy, most high, supreme God: all good, supreme good, totally good, You Who alone are good, may we give You all praise, all glory, all thanks, all honor, all blessing, and all good. So be it! So be it! Amen.[60]

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tuam misercordiam ineffabilem . . ., ut inimicos propter te veraciter diligamus et pro eis apud te devote intercedamus, nulli malum pro malo reddentes et in omnibus in te prodesse studeamus."

[59] Revelation 5:12, The Latin vulgate reads, "Dicentium voce magna dignus est agnus qui occisus est accipere virtutem et divinitatem et sapientiam et fortitudinem et honorem et gloriam et benedictionem." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive strength and divinity and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!"

[60] *Praises to Be Said at all the Hours*, Prayer, v. 11, *FAED* 1, p. 126; *Opuscula*, pp. 320–321: "Omnipotens, sanctissime, altissime et summe Deus, omne bonum, summum bonum, totum bonum, qui solus es bonus (Lk 18:19), tibi reddamus omnem

With this prayer one enters into the *Office of the Passion* connected in time and space with the heavenly liturgy directed to the praise of God who is all good, and who manifested himself in Jesus Christ, the Lamb who was slain. This prayer invites all God's works and all God's servants, "small and great,"[61] and all creatures to give glory to God. The movement of the prayer in terms of praise leads to the acknowledgment of God as all good, concretely imaged in the Lamb who was slain, by recognizing that all good belongs to God. Thus, connected to the lived experience of the brothers, liturgical praise returns everything to God.[62]

Following the *Praises*, the antiphon *Holy Virgin Mary* was recited at the beginning and end of each psalm. The antiphon begins: "[1]Holy Virgin Mary, among the women born into the world, there is no one like you. [2]Daughter and servant of the most high and supreme King and of the Father in heaven, Mother of our most holy Lord Jesus Christ, Spouse of the Holy Spirit."[63] Mary is celebrated in her relationship to the Trinitarian God as daughter, servant, mother and spouse. This text reaffirms the connection between the praise of God in everyday life, and the model for this realization of praise in Mary.

After the Antiphon to Mary the appropriate psalm is recited. The Office itself is composed of fifteen psalms, which are distributed by rubric over the course of the liturgical year.[64] During the course of

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laudem, omnem gloriam, omnem gratiam, omnem honorem, omnem benedictionem et omnia bona. Fiat. Fiat. Amen."

[61] *Praises to be Said at all the Hours*, v. 6, *FAED* 1, p. 161; *Opuscula*, p. 320: "Laudem dicite Deo nostro omnes servi eius et qui timetis Deum pusilli et magni."

[62] Carlo Paolazzi demonstrates that the Writings reflect a consistency in terms of language and word usage, suggesting that the brothers with Francis carefully controlled their content. Specifically, he demonstrates that the nouns praise and good, and the verb to praise, are used consistently throughout the Writings only to refer to God. Consult his essay, "Gli 'Scritti' tra Francesco e I suoi scrivani: un nodo da sciogliere," *Antonianum* 75 (2000), pp. 481–497.

[63] *FAED* 1, p. 141; *Opuscula*, p. 339: "Sancta Maria virgo, non est tibi similis nata in mundo in mulieribus, filia et ancilla altissimi summi Regis Patris caelestis, mater sanctissimi Domini nostri Jesu Christi, sponsa Spiritus Sancti . . ." Lehmann identifies a source for this text in an antiphon to Mary attributed to Peter Damian, but he demonstrated how the development of the Antiphon in the Office is much more theological than this parallel source. Consult, Lehmann, *Tiefe und Weite*, pp. 100–103.

[64] Dominique Gagnan, "Office of the Passion: The Daily Prayer of Saint Francis," *Greyfriars Review* 7 Supplement (1993), provides an explanation of how the psalms of this Office are distributed through the year, and suggests traditional allegorical understandings of the various hours in terms of the passion and death of Christ. One thing to note, however, is that the title, *Office of the Passion*, is really inexact,

a day there are seven liturgical hours, and the Office begins with the hour of Compline and is completed the next day at Vespers. The first seven psalms of the *Office of the Passion* follow Christ from the agony in the garden through the resurrection and ascension. Additional psalms are provided for different liturgical seasons, and a special psalm is provided for Christmas. The psalms are composed in the context of the traditional understanding of the psalms as the prayer of Christ and the Church, specifically identifying the voice of the one who prays with the voice of Jesus in dialogue with his Father.

What is emphasized throughout the passion cycle (Psalms I–VII) is the experience of human life as fragile, vulnerable, and weak in suffering as well as in the context of life in the world, lived with a confident faith in "Our Most Holy Father," who is present to the life and experience of the person who voices the psalm. These psalms are prayed in the voice of the servant of God who despite persecution and suffering, remains faithful to God's plan. While describing the hostility of even family and friends, as well as the obstacles placed in the way by enemies, the servant remains confident in God's presence and help, and lifts his voice in praise to God who does not abandon his faithful. While Francis and the brothers have the image of Jesus the suffering servant before their eyes as they pray this Office, the historical and social reality reflects the difficulties faced by the brothers because of their choice to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. The challenges of their chosen lifestyle, the ridicule of family and friends for choosing such a path, is thus experienced as salvific in light of the experience of the human life of Jesus as described in the Gospel. But in addition to this context of social suffering, the experience of a simple, ordinary and real everyday human living is given voice in these prayers as the locus from which the praise of God, prayer in the specific Franciscan meaning, is voiced.

In a particular way, psalm seven, the Easter psalm, and psalm fifteen, the Nativity psalm, express quite clearly the understanding of prayer which emerges in the Writings. Psalm seven reads as follows:

> [1] All you nations, clap your hands, shout to God with a voice of gladness. [2] For the Lord, the Most High, the Awesome is the Great King over all the earth. [3] For the Most Holy Father of heaven, our King before all ages sent His Beloved Son from on high and has brought

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as the Office includes the entire sweep of salvation history from the Incarnation through the Resurrection and Ascension.

> salvation in the midst of the earth. [4] Let the heavens rejoice and the earth exult, let the sea and all that is in it be moved, let the fields and all that is in them be glad. [5] Sing a new song to Him, Sing to the Lord all the earth. [6] Because the Lord is great and highly to be praised, awesome beyond all gods. [7] Give to the Lord, you families of nations, Give to the Lord glory and honor, give to the Lord the glory due His name. [8] Take up your bodies and carry His holy cross and follow His most holy commands even to the end. [9] Let the whole earth tremble before His face, tell among the nations that the Lord has ruled from a tree.[65]

This psalm is constructed as a celebration of God's victory in Jesus who was sent from on high to bring salvation to earth (verse 3). The heavens and the earth are invited to rejoice and give praise, and the families of the nations are invited to give to the Lord glory and honor. Verse eight suggests that the way the nations are called to give honor to God is by taking up one's body and carrying Christ's cross in homage to Him who reigned from a tree. The core of verses three and eight are made up of texts taken for the most part from the Gospels, and are inserted into various psalm verses in order to create the dynamic which the resurrection celebrates. In a very concrete sense, what is begun in the incarnation, in the enfleshment of God, is completed and fully realized in the resurrection where the enfleshed God returns to the Father (verse 3). These actions of Jesus which summarize his entire life are presented as the model for the brothers to follow: the brothers are called in this prayer to take up their bodies and carry Jesus' cross (verse 8). In doing this through the way they live they join in the praise of creation to God's victory in Jesus. The brothers thus give praise to God by taking up their bodies, by doing what Jesus did in his life and passion, in his struggle to remain faithful to what he promised to do. In this psalm then, the brothers are celebrating their life of prayer and praise in both word and flesh, as they challenge themselves to remember and do what they promised. They are to pay attention above all to what God is doing in the world, which is precisely what this psalm celebrates.

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[65] *Office of the Passion* 7, *FAED* 1, p. 147; *Opuscula*, pp. 343–344. Here I give the Latin text only for verses three and eight, those verses which are the focus of the analysis: "[3] Quia sanctissimus Pater de caelo, Rex noster ante saecula + misit dilectum Filium suum de alto et operatus est salutem in medio terrae. [8]Tollite corpora vestra et baiulate sanctam crucem eius + et sequimini usque in finem sanctissima praecepta eius."

The Christmas psalm, psalm fifteen of the *Office of the Passion*, celebrates the same reality in terms of the incarnation:

> [1] Exult in God our help! Shout to the Lord God living and true with cries of gladness! [2] Because the Lord, the Most High, the Awesome, is the Great King over all the earth. [3] Because the Most Holy Father of heaven, our King before all ages,+ sent His Beloved Son from on high and He was born of the Blessed Virgin Holy Mary. [4] He called to me: You are my Father and I will place Him, my firstborn, as the Highest,+ above all the kings of the earth. [5] On that day the Lord sent His mercy and at night His song. [6] This is the day the Lord has made let us rejoice and be glad in it. [7] For the Most Holy Child has been given to us + and has been placed for us on the way and placed in a manger because he did not have a place in the inn. [8] Glory to the Lord God in the highest and peace on earth to those of good will. [9] Let the heavens rejoice and the earth exult, let the sea and its fullness resound, let the fields and all that is in them be joyful. [10] Sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth. [11] Because the Lord is great and worthy of praise He is awesome beyond all gods. [12] Give to the Lord, you families of nations, give to the Lord glory and praise, give to the Lord the glory due His name. [13] Take up your bodies and carry His holy cross and follow His most holy commands even to the end.[66]

The movement of the Christmas psalm parallels that of the Easter psalm. Following an invitation to praise God, the Most High, there is an affirmation of what God has done in sending his Son from on high to be born of Mary. Verses five and six affirm the centrality of the incarnation as the expression of God's mercy. Verse seven continues with a concrete description of the incarnation in terms of its location, happening as stated "on the way" and in a manger, rather than in an inn.[67] While inspired by the Gospel accounts of

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[66] *Office of the Passion* 15, *FAED* 1, pp. 156–157; *Opuscula*, pp. 350–351. Given here are the Latin text of only the additions to the Psalm texts:" [3] Quia sanctissimus pater de caelo, Rex noster ante saecula misit dilectum Filium suum de alto + et natus fuit de beata virgine sancta Maria. [7] Quia sanctissimus puer dilectus datus est nobis et natus fuit pro nobis in via positus in praesepio + quia non habebat locum in diversorio. [13] Tollite corpora vestra et baiulate sanctam crucem eius + et sequimini usque in finem sanctissima praecepta eius."

[67] Felice Accrocca has demonstrated that the expression used here to describe the location of the incarnation, *in via*, had its source in Homily 8 of Gregory the Great's *Homiliae in Evangelia*, who wrote that, "Qui non in parentum domum, sed in via nascitur." This homily of Gregory was contained in Francis's Breviary in the seventh lesson of Matins of Christmas night. See his "*Natus fuit pro nobis in via* (Off. Pass. XV,7). Gregorio Magno fonte di Francesco d'Assisi," *Collectanea Franciscana* 70:3–4 (2000), pp. 340–341.

the Nativity, this addition underlines the conditions of the incarnation in the time and space of this world.[68] This verse seems to echo the statement in the *Earlier Rule* that the brothers "must rejoice when they live among people considered of little value and looked down upon, among the poor and the powerless, the sick and the lepers, and the beggars "by the wayside" (*iuxta viam*)."[69] One can understand verse seven of the Christmas psalm as describing the social location of the incarnation, again calling to mind the choice the brothers have made to follow the footprints of Jesus rather than the Commune of Assisi. Thus, parallel between these additions in the Christmas psalm (Psalm 15) and those of the Easter psalm (Psalm 7), and the identical invitation to praise in both, establish a connection between the incarnation and resurrection which is striking and difficult to overlook in terms of the concrete choice God made in the incarnation.[70] Taking up one's body and carrying Christ's cross reinforces the choices the brothers have made in professing their Rule and life. Hence, the vocal praise of prayer is echoed in the praise given through a concrete praxis of life. Praying the *Office of the Passion* articulates and brings to consciousness the praise that is innate in Franciscan living. Put in other words, in the concrete choices, actions, and behaviors of the brothers, God is given praise.

The devotional prayer of the *Office of the Passion* thus gives voice to life. Each hour of the *Office of the Passion* concludes with the repetition of the antiphon, Holy Virgin Mary, and the simple prayer: "Let us bless the Lord God living and true! Let us always render Him praise, glory, honor, blessing and every good. Amen. Amen. So be it. So be it."[71] The final word of prayer—*fiat*—is the same word that Mary uttered in response to the angel's greeting at the annunciation in Luke's Gospel, "Let it be done to me according to your word." (Lk 1:38).[72] Prayer both begins with and culminates in action.

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[68] See the reflections of Leonhard Lehmann, "The 'Nativity Psalm' (OffPass 15)," *Greyfriars Review* 12:1 (1998), pp. 241–253.

[69] *Earlier Rule* 9.2; *Opuscula*, p. 385: "Et debent gaudere, quando conversantur inter viles et despectas personas, inter pauperes et debiles et infirmos et leprosos ex iuxta viam mendicantes."

[70] Psalm 15: 9–12, are identical to the verses in Psalm 7:4–7.

[71] *Office of the Passion*, Prayer, *FAED* 1, p. 141; *Opuscula*, p. 339: "Benedicamus Domino Deo vivo et vero; laudem, gloriam, honorem, benedictionem et omnia bona referamus ei semper. Amen. Amen. Fiat. Fiat."

[72] The Latin Vulgate renders this verse as "fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum."

As the action of praise in the life of the brothers characterizes the *Office of the Passion*. so the action of cosmic praise characterizes the *Canticle of Creatures*. The *Canticle of Creatures* celebrates creation as the embodiment of the praise of God, beginning and ending with the action of praise and service. Composed by Francis in three stages between the winter of 1225 and October 1226,[73] it has been best described as a cosmic liturgy, a universal appeal to praise of the creator by Thomas of Celano who wrote, "Once the three young men in the furnace of burning fire invited all the elements to praise and glorify the Creator of all things, so [Francis], full of the spirit of God never stopped glorifying, praising, and blessing the Creator and Ruler of all things in all the elements and creatures."[74] As developed above, praise is experienced as the most proper form of prayer for the early brothers. This prayer, composed in vernacular rhymed prose, celebrates creation's praise of the "Most High, all-powerful, good Lord," to whom all creation belongs.[75] The prayer begins with the affirmation that creation gives praise to the Most High in and through itself:

> [3] Praised be You, my Lord, with all your creatures, especially Sir Brother Sun, who is the day and through whom you give us light. [4] And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor; and bears a likeness of You, Most High One.
> [5] Praise be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars, in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.
> [6] Praised be You, my Lord through Brother Wind, and through the air, cloudy and serene and every kind of weather, through whom You give sustenance to Your creatures.
> [7] Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

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[73] For a concise description of the context of composition of the Canticle, consult Carlo Paolazzi, *Lettura degli "Scritti" di Francesco d'Assisi*, pp. 142–159.

[74] Thomas of Celano, *Life of Saint Francis*, 29.80, *FAED* 1, pp. 250–251; "Sicut enim olim tres pueri, in camino ignis ardentis positi, ad laudandum et glorificandum creatorem universitatis, elementa omnia invitabant, sic et iste vir, spiritu Dei plenus, in omnibus elementis et creaturis creatorem omnium ac gubernatorem glorificare, laudare ac benedicere non cessabat;" *Fontes*, p. 356.

[75] Concerning the structure and literary quality of the text consult Lino Leonardi and Francesco Santi, "La letteratura religiosa," in *Storia della letteratura Italiana, I: Dalle origini a Dante*, ed. Enrico Malato (Rome, 1995), pp. 352–361; Carlo Paolazzi, "Francesco d'Assisi, la "Lode", il *Cantico* e la letteratura volgare," in *Il Francescanesimo e il teatro medievale*. Atti del Convegno Nazionale di Studi San Miniato, 8–9–10 ottobre 1982 (Castelfiorentino: Società storica della valdelsa, 1984), pp. 71–120; Giovanni Pozzi, "Lo stile di san Francesco," *Italia medievale e umanistica* 41 (2000), pp. 7–72.

> [8] Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs.[76]

In these verses the *Canticle* suggests that it is in the very nature of created reality to praise God through and in its relationships and natural qualities. The *Canticle* celebrates creation as constituted in relationships of Brother, Sister, and Mother. As demonstrated above, the spirit of the Lord which urges the brothers to pray always with a pure heart, is the same spirit which makes of men and women brothers, sisters and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ.[77] This would suggest that creation, in its particularity and concrete existence, sings praise to the Most High just by being what it is.[78] Human beings are called to this same response of praise by living in relationship with creation and others. The *Canticle* goes on to speak of what humans need to do in order to join in creation's praise:

> [10] Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for your love, and bear infirmity and tribulation.
> [11] Blessed are those who endure in peace for by You, Most High, shall they be crowned.[79]

Francis composed this verse and added it to the *Canticle* in the context of a feud between the Bishop and Podestà of Assisi. This feud

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[76] *Canticle of Creatures*, *FAED* 1, pp. 113–114; Umbrian version taken from *Scritti*, pp. 234–236 (this edition of the text was edited by Carlo Paolazzi, who altered the edition given by Esser in the *Opuscula*, based on manuscripts subsequent to Assisi 338): "Laudato sie, mi' Signore, cum tutte le Tue creature, spezialmente messor lo frate Sole, lo qual è iorno et allumini noi per lui. Et ellu è bellu e radiante cum grande splendore: de Te, Altissimo, porta significazione. Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sora Luna e le stelle: in celu l'ài formate clarite e preziose e belle. Laudato si', mi' Signore, per frate Vento e per aere e nubilo e sereno et onne tempo, per lo quale a le Tue creature dài sustentamento. Laudato si'm mi' Signore, per sor' Acqua, la quale è multo utile et humile e preziosa e casta. Laudato si' mi' Signore, per frate Focu, per lo quale ennallumini la notte: ed ello è bello e iocundo e robustoso e forte. Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sora nostra matre Terra la quale ne sustenta e governa, e produce diversi frutti con coloriti flori et herba."

[77] See above the discussion of the *Early Admonition and Exhortation to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance* 19–21; *Later Rule* 10.7–10.

[78] The scriptural background to the Canticle is developed best by Carlo Paolazzi, *Il Cantico di frate Sole*. Also valuable is Roger D. Sorrell, *St. Francis of Assisi and Nature: Tradition and Innovation in Western Attitudes toward the Environment* (New York, 1998).

[79] *Canticle of Creatures* 10–11, *FAED* 1, p. 114; *Scritti*, p. 235: "Laudato si', mi' Signore, per quelli ke perdonano per lo Tuo amore e sostengo infirmitate e tribulazione. Beati quelli ke 'l sosterrano in pace, ka da Te, Altissimo, sirano incoronati."

expressed some of the social tensions existing within Assisi. The bishop represented the nobility, and the Podestà the merchant class. These social tensions created an atmosphere of strife and gave birth to violence within the city, causing more suffering for the poor and marginalized. After composing this verse, Francis sent the brothers to sing the *Canticle* to both parties, and as a result, peace was restored. The significance of this verse is thus suggested by the context of its composition. Human sin is the cause of division and discord with God and among humans. In order to become one voice with creation's praise, humans must pardon, bear infirmities, and live in peace, in other words, they must attend to the social reality of conflict and division with healing and peace.

The final reconciliation is that of death:

> [12] Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whom no one living can escape.
> [13] Woe to those who die in mortal sin. Blessed are those who will be found in Your most Holy will, for the second death shall do them no harm.[80]

God's will for humanity and creation is that in and through relationships established by the spirit of the Lord, praise be given to the Most High, to whom all things belong. And finally, humans are invited to:

> [14] Praise and bless my Lord and give thanks and serve Him with great humility.[81]

This final verse summarizes again the basic meaning of prayer for Francis and the early brothers as it emerges in the Early Writings. Prayer is praise in word and action. To pray is to give praise, blessing, and thanks in humble service. Praise in word and action is how the good things God gives are returned to God. Creation thus shows humans the pattern and method to accomplish this, through spirit inspired relationships that characterize human lives of praise and thanksgiving to God who is all good!

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[80] *Canticle of Creatures* 12–13, *FAED* 1, p. 114, adjusted by the author; *Scritti*, pp. 235–236: "Laudato si', mi' Signore, per sora nostra Morte corporale, da la quale nullu homo vivente po' skappare: guai a cquelli ke morrano ne le peccata mortali; beati quelli ke trovarà ne le Tue santissime voluntati, ka la morte seconda no 'l farrà male."

[81] *Canticle of Creatures* 14, *FAED* 1, p. 114, adjusted by the author; *Scritti*, p. 236: "Laudate e benedicete mi' Signore e rengraziate e serviateli cum grande humilitate."

By Way of Conclusion

The Writings of Francis and the early brothers do not present a theory or a systematically developed theology of prayer, but rather they assume a practice of prayer integral to their fraternal life. The brothers were convinced that prayer encompassed every aspect of their lives, and that the maxim *forma vivendi forma orandi* was valid and normative. Their practice of prayer was a response in word and action to all that God had done: "You are holy, Lord God, who does wonders,"[82] and in this context prayer becomes, properly speaking, a life of praise, adoration, thanksgiving, and blessing. Prayer is understood thus as the action of giving back to God the goods that God has given and continues to give to all people. Prayer is directed to God in words, psalms and hymns, but it is also directed to God in and through a life that enacts praise through behavior that incarnates socially the life of the Gospel as expressed in the Rule of the lesser brothers.[83]

The Writings of Francis and the early brothers bear witness to a remarkable consistency in terms of both the understanding the role that prayer held in Franciscan life, and also to the understanding of Franciscan life itself as prayer. This consistency between prayer and life in its social expression and action, is one of the features of early Franciscan reflection that merits attention in light of the subsequent history of the Franciscan Order which was fractured as a result of issues related to institutionalization, clericalization, and the embrace of power in the Church and world. In the light of the Writings of Francis and the early brothers, these historical issues and the attendant questions that divided the Order suggest perhaps, that in their core, these historical realities bespeak a forgetfulness of how the early brothers prayed, with all that this implied!

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[82] *The Praises of God* 1, my translation; *Opuscula*, p. 142: "Tu es sanctus Dominus Deus solus, qui facis mirabilia."

[83] I am indebted to the reflections of Carlo Paolazzi on Admonition 7, where he states, "Restituire al Signore 'con la parola e con l'esempio' la scienza procurata a noi dalla parola di Dio, significa dunque per Francesco due cose: *lodare* il Signore che per la sua bontà ci ne ha fatto dono, e farla ritornare a lui divenuta 'spirito e vita.'" *Lettura degli "Scritti di Francesco d'Assisi*, p. 123. However, the understanding of prayer in the Writings developed in this essay differs somewhat from Paolazzi's based on both a different approach to the nature of the texts as well as to the social dimension of Franciscan life. For both of these approaches I am indebted to the work of David Flood.

CLARE OF ASSISI AND THE MYSTICISM OF MOTHERHOOD

Ilia Delio

Introduction

The thirteenth century was a period of the "flowering of mysticism," to use the title of a recent volume on the history of Christian mysticism.[1] Beginning in the late twelfth century, according to Bernard McGinn, a new type of mysticism arose among the laity as theology broke out of the walls of the cloister and found a new means of expression in the vernacular tongue of lay men and women. The rise of lay spirituality, including the various evangelical movements, reflected a more democratized and secularized spirituality that transcended the boundaries between rich and poor, literate and illiterate, men and women. Rather, the experience of God became the basis of a new "vernacular theology" that reflected new ways to approach God and to attain union with God while remaining in the world.[2]

Clare of Assisi could be counted among these new vernacular theologians of the Middle Ages, as she sought to describe in a few simple but dense writings the significance of living the Gospel (evangelical) life. She referred to herself as a "little plant" (*la piantecella*) of Francis of Assisi, one in whom the Gospel was rooted in such a way that he attracted a large following dedicated to a mendicant and itinerant way of life.[3] The difficulties of pursuing such a life as a medieval

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[1] See Bernard McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism: Men and Women in the New Mysticism—1200–1350*, vol. III, *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism* (New York, 1998).

[2] Bernard McGinn distinguishes vernacular theology from monastic and scholastic theology. He describes the vernacular theologian as one who claims authority *ex beneficio* (that is, from grace) and who speaks in a vernacular language. See McGinn, *Flowering of Mysticism*, pp. 19–22.

[3] Evangelical life could be described simply as "bringing the Gospel to life" or "making Jesus Christ live again." The renewal of Gospel life was integral to the rise of the laity in the Middle Ages. For a discussion on evangelical life see Joseph P. Chinnici, "Evangelical and Apostolic Tensions" *Proceedings: Our Franciscan Charism*

woman, however, impelled Clare and her sisters to assume a form of life that was monastic in structure rather than mendicant in nature.[4] Yet, in her letters to Agnes of Prague, a noble woman she never met but to whom she felt a kindred spirit, Clare revealed a desire to live fully in the mystery of the Incarnation and actively participate in evangelical life. Rather than pursuing a type of *fuga mundi* which characterized the monastic tradition, Clare focused her attention on living the Gospel as a follower of Christ. Her letters to Agnes reveal a mystical path. The fruit of her reflections can be summed up in the term "mysticism of motherhood" whereby Christ comes to birth in the life of the believer. This type of mysticism is developed through prayer but expressed in the practice of a virtuous and loving life. Although Clare does not speak of prayer explicitly in her letters to Agnes, she conveys a spirituality of ever deepening relationship with the crucified Spouse that leads one to become, like the Spouse, crucified in love. The union is of such degree that, for Clare, it means giving birth to Christ in one's life. The purpose of this essay is to understand how prayer leads to a mysticism of motherhood and how this "giving birth to Christ" is fundamental to her understanding of what it means to be a member of the Church.

To elaborate this thesis, I have divided the paper into four sections. The first section examines the notion of spiritual motherhood, first as it emerged among the Cistercians, and then as it was developed by Francis and Clare. The second section will examine the importance of poverty in the development of spiritual motherhood. We will see how poverty is integrally related to prayer and how it

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Today (New Jersey, 1987), pp. 1–32; idem, "The Prophetic Heart: The Evangelical Form of Religious Life in the Contemporary United States" *The Cord* 44 (1994), pp. 292–306; Thaddeus Horgan, "Evangelical Life in Apostolic Communities" *The Cord* 36 (1986), pp. 246–251; Kathleen Uhler, "The Charism and Contributions of the Franciscan Evangelical Life in Church and World" *The Cord* 44 (1994), pp. 339–346; Dorothy McCormack, "The Essential Elements of the Evangelical Life of Franciscans" *The Cord* 38 (1988), pp. 241–246. For a more general discussion see André Vauchez, *The Laity in the Middle Ages: Religious Practices and Experiences*, ed. and intro. Daniel E. Bornstein, trans. Margery J. Schneider (Notre Dame, 1993).

[4] The complex development of Clare's way of life has been the subject of recent studies. For a comprehensive treatment of the subject see Maria Pia Alberzoni, "Clare of Assisi and Women's Franciscanism," trans. Edward Hagman, *Greyfriars Review* 17.1 (2003), pp. 5–38; Leslie Knox, "Clare of Assisi: Foundress of an Order?" in *An Unencumbered Heart: A Tribute to Clare of Assisi 1253–2003*, ed. Jean François Godet-Calogeras and Roberta McKelvie (New York, 2004), pp. 11–29.

shapes the path to God in that it leads one to participate in the divine life. The third section will study poverty as it relates to contemplation and transformation which underlie spiritual motherhood. We will examine how contemplation is related to self-identity and transformation which, for Clare, is *imitatio Christi*. The final section will explore *imitatio Christi* as a mysticism of motherhood. Here the themes of spiritual motherhood, Marian devotion and Eucharist will be discussed. We will conclude by placing Clare's spiritual path to God in the context of evangelical life, noting how she contributes to the understanding of Gospel life as integral to the life of the Church.

Spiritual Motherhood in Monks and Mendicants

Among the many shifts in medieval spirituality, devotion to the humanity of Christ marked by affectivity was preeminent. In her book, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages*, the noted historian Caroline Walker Bynum writes, "the affective piety of the high Middle Ages was based on an increasing sense of, first, humankind's creation 'in the image and likeness' of God and, second, the humanity of Christ as guarantee that what we are is inextricably joined with divinity."[5] The language of spiritual motherhood emerged in the context of broad changes in religious imagery, devotion, and theology in the high Middle Ages. The new religious sensibility of affectivity allowed the seeker of God to identify with the poor and humble Christ in his humanity as a way to attain to God. Love rather than knowledge was the key to union with God, and the path to love was to follow Christ from his humanity to his divinity. Coupled with this new religious sensibility was a new understanding of Jesus as mother. The lyrical, emotional piety that developed in the eleventh century and flowed into the twelfth century focused not only on the humanity of Christ but more specifically on the feminine aspect of Christ's humanity.

One of the first writers to describe the image of Jesus as mother was the monk Anselm of Canterbury, an unlikely source who, in his

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[5] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1982), p. 130.

Monologion, objected to calling God "mother" because he held that male is superior to female.[6] In his prayers addressed to the apostle Paul and to Jesus, however, Anselm discloses a more compassionate and sentimental spirit, describing Jesus as a mother who longs to gather us under her wings and care for us. He writes: "And you, Jesus, are you not also a mother? Are you not the mother who, like a hen, gathers her chickens under her wings? Truly, Lord, you are a mother for both they who are in labor and they who are brought forth are accepted by you."[7] His prayers, highlighting the motherhood of Jesus, reflect not the arguments of a theologian but the sentiments of a heart that seeks God. Jesus is our Mother, according to Anselm, because he incarnates the tender, compassionate love of God that longs to embrace us.

The idea of God's compassionate love reflected in the image of Jesus as Mother found a popular audience among Cistercian writers in the twelfth century. The feminine image of Jesus can be found in the writings of Bernard of Clairvaux, Isaac of Stella and Guerric of Igny, among others. For most of these writers, the motherhood of Jesus was identified with the role of authority, either as abbot, prelate or novice master. Bynum claims that "every Cistercian author in whose writings maternal imagery plays a prominent role was himself an abbot (and in some cases a novice master as well)."[8] Spiritual writers in general perceived three basic stereotypes of the female or the mother: the female is generative and sacrificial in her generation; the female is loving and tender; the female is nurturing.[9] For the Cistercian writers, emphasis was placed on nurturing, caring, and consoling others who were placed under one's charge. In a letter to the parents of a young monk, for example, Bernard writes, "I will be for him both a mother and a father, both a brother and a sister. I will make the crooked path straight for him and the rough places smooth."[10] One might say that the image of Jesus as mother provided

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[6] Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, p. 113.

[7] Anselm of Canterbury, "Prayers to St. Paul" in *The Prayers and Meditations of Saint Anselm with the Proslogion*, trans. Sister Benedicta Ward, forward by R.W. Southern (London, 1973), p. 155.

[8] Anselm of Canterbury, "Prayers to St. Paul," p. 156.

[9] See "Prayer to St. Paul" in *The Prayers and Meditations of Saint Anselm*, pp. 152–156.

[10] Bernard of Clairvaux, Letter 110 (*PL* 182, 153). *The Letters of St. Bernard of Clairvaux*, trans. Bruno Scott James (London, 1953), p. 169.

an example of relationship that fostered relations of trust and care among the monks. It was an outgrowth of affective piety that emphasized the feminine dimension of God's relationship to us as one who cares for us and nurtures us, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings to guard those she loves.

While the Cistercians' focus on the motherhood of Jesus was evident in the Middle Ages, it is difficult to say exactly to what extent it influenced the use of feminine imagery in the writings of Francis. One could say that Francis used the image of mother in regard to authority and obedience in a way similar to Bernard. Just as Bernard described himself as a mother to his [spiritual] sons, so too did Francis. In his *Letter to Leo*, for example, Francis writes: "Brother Leo, your brother Francis health and peace. I am speaking to you, my Son in this way as a mother . . . In whatever way it seems better to you to please the Lord God and to follow His footprints and poverty, you may do it with the blessing of the Lord God and my obedience."[11] Francis's letter connotes familiar relationships (brother—son—mother) in the context of authority and obedience. Rather than telling Leo what he should do, Francis shows a loving attitude of openness and acceptance to the work of the Spirit in Leo's life. This attitude of maternal care and concern complements a point he makes to the brothers in his *Earlier Rule* where he states: "Let each one love and care for his brother as a mother loves and cares for her son in those matters in which God has given him the grace."[12] For Francis, fraternal relationships entail an interdependence of love and concern—not autonomy and self-sufficiency. The same mother-son relationship is described in his *Rule for Hermitages* where those who are "mothers" are to care for the hermit "sons," protecting them from everyone so that no one can speak with them.[13] Whereas the Cistercians emphasized the exemplary pattern of Jesus as mother,[14] for Francis spiritual motherhood is related to penance and poverty, that is, personal conversion. Only one who is living in conversion

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[11] *LtL* 1, 3, 9–11; *FAED* 1, p. 123; *Opuscula*, p. 222.
[12] *ER* 9.11, *FAED* 1, p. 71; *Opuscula*, p. 386.
[13] *RH* 1–2, *FAED* 1, p. 61; *Opuscula*, p. 409.
[14] While the emphasis on the exemplary pattern of Jesus as mother was true in general for the Cistercians, some like Isaac of Stella and Aelred of Rievaulx, also saw motherhood in terms of dependence and union. Isaac of Stella described incorporation into the body of Christ as the "completion" of Christ, an idea which resonates with the Franciscans. See *Jesus as Mother*, p. 95.

and striving to be poor can imitate the motherhood of Jesus. Spiritual motherhood is the fruit of "following the footprints of Christ" and therefore is integrally related to evangelical life or the life of making Jesus Christ alive.[15] In this respect, spiritual motherhood is not limited to what we do, our attitudes and behaviors, but is concerned primarily with what we are and what we are becoming in our relation to Christ. Because conversion is integral to spiritual motherhood, the basis of spiritual motherhood for Francis is rooted in poverty. Poverty is that life of dispossessiveness (*sine proprio*) that allows one to be open to the Spirit of the Lord. Francis viewed poverty as the foundation of community because it enabled the brothers to be interdependent in such a way that their lives in Christ could be completed only in relation to one another. Since love is the binding force of fraternal relationships, Francis described the bonds of love between brothers in terms of maternal care and compassion. In his *Later Rule* he wrote:

> Let the brothers not make anything their own. . . . Wherever the brother may be and meet one another let them show that they are members of the same family. Let each one confidently make known his need to the other, for if a mother loves and cares for her son according to the flesh, how much more diligently must someone love and care for his brother according to the Spirit.[16]

To "love and care for one's brother according to the Spirit" is the key to spiritual motherhood for Francis. Spiritual motherhood rests not so much on the example of Jesus but on being joined to Christ by the Spirit. The essence of his thought is captured in his *Later Admonition and Exhortation* where he writes: "We are spouses when the faithful soul is united by the Holy Spirit to our Lord Jesus Christ. We are brothers, moreover, when we do the will of His Father who is in heaven; mothers when we carry Him in our heart and body through love and a pure and sincere conscience; and give Him birth through a holy activity, which must shine before others by example."[17] To be espoused to Christ by the Holy Spirit is to be joined to Christ

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[15] See Francis of Assisi's *Later Rule* where he writes: "The rule and life of the lesser brothers is this: to observe the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by living in obedience, without anything of one's own, and in chastity." *LR* 1.1, *FAED* 1, p. 100; *Opuscula*, pp. 366–367.

[16] *LR* 6.8, *FAED* 1, p. 103; *Opuscula*, p. 369.

[17] 2*LtF* 51–53, *FAED* 1, p. 49; *Opuscula*, p. 211.

in such a way that one enters into familial relationships in Christ. When Francis speaks of being a "mother" to a "brother," as he does in his *Earlier Rule*, he has in mind that one is first joined to Christ by the Spirit. One who is joined to Christ by the Spirit is *both* brother and mother insofar as one is joined inwardly to Christ and outwardly to the neighbor in whom Christ lives. To be joined to Christ, therefore, one must be free, dispossessed of anything that will hinder union. Hence, poverty is necessary for the fruitfulness of union with Christ.

Whereas Bernard and the Cistercians in general did not *necessarily* link mystical espousal to the motherhood of Jesus, for Francis espousal is the condition for such motherhood. Mystical union, for Bernard, is not a matter of the flesh but of the spirit; it is union with the divine Word of God whereby the soul enters into a spiritual contract, a holy embrace where identity of will makes of two one spirit. In his *Sermon* 83 he writes: "Such conformity weds the soul to the Word, for one who is like the Word by nature shows himself like him too in the exercise of his will, loving as she is loved. . . . Truly this is a spiritual contract, a holy marriage . . . an embrace where identity of will makes of two one spirit."[18] Bernard describes a union of pure and perfect love that transcends humanity and is completely spiritual in nature. For Francis, however, to be espoused to Christ is not to transcend humanity but to be spiritually joined to humanity, that is, to express spiritual union in the flesh, to become a new creation in Christ. Whereas Bernard's understanding of union is more platonic, personal and intimate in nature, Francis describes union in the context of familial relationships—brother, sister, mother. To be united with Christ is to be a member of the human family, not a privileged exception from it. It is in the context of family that the motherhood of Jesus assumes its meaning for the Francis.

We find the same emphasis on conversion and spiritual motherhood in Clare but with a more explicit incarnational emphasis. In her letters to Agnes of Prague, who she described as "half her soul,"[19]

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[18] Bernard of Clairvaux, *On the Song of Songs* I, trans. Irene Edmonds, intro. Jean Leclercq (Kalamazoo, 1980), p. 182.

[19] *CAED*, 4*LAg* 1, p. 54; *Écrits*, p. 110. The Latin texts for Clare's writings are found in Claire d'Assise, *Écrits*, eds. Marie-France Becker, Jean-François Godet, and Thaddée Matura (Paris, 1985), and will be referred to as *Écrits*. The English translations of these writings and other texts concerning Clare are cited from *Clare of*

Clare speaks of the Spouse to whom Agnes has been joined. Like Francis, poverty provides the foundation for this sacred exchange (*sacrum commercium*) between Agnes and the poor, crucified Christ. In her second letter to Agnes, Clare writes, "As someone zealous for the holiest poverty, in a spirit of great humility and the most ardent love, you have held fast to the footprints of Him to whom you merited to be joined in marriage."[20] Clare sees that one who is espoused to Christ, like Agnes, is a sister of Christ and is called to love like Christ through suffering and compassion. As we shall see, Clare's notion of spiritual motherhood underscores a lifelong relationship with Christ that entails personal transformation; it is essentially a life of prayer. Only the poor person, who is free enough to enter into relationship with the crucified Spouse, can entrust oneself to a God of unconditional love, and become transformed by grace into the divine likeness.

The Franciscans' attraction to the motherhood of Jesus, on the whole, corresponds to spiritual maturity—union leads to transformation and the birth of Christ in the believer which must be expressed outwardly in one's manner of life. For Clare, this will mean not only living the Gospel life but moreover it will mean becoming an active participant in the Body of Christ, the Church. Whereas the role of Jesus as Mother for the Cistercians is exemplary, for the Franciscans it is spiritual and mystical. Spiritual motherhood refers not to what Jesus has done for us but rather what we become when the compassionate love of God takes root in us. Francis is clear on this point when he writes that spiritual espousal which leads to the birth of Christ in the believer must show itself in human example. In his *Later Admonition and Exhortation* he writes: "We are mothers when we carry him in our heart and body through love and a pure and sincere conscience; we give birth to him through [his] holy manner of working which should shine before others as an example."[21] It is not so much what we do but what we are in Christ that shapes what we do and thus how we live out the Gospel. That is, our "becoming Christ" must bear its effects on the world around us. Clare lays out the path toward becoming this new creation in Christ. As we give

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Assisi: Early Documents, ed. Regis Armstrong (Saint Bonaventure: 1993), and will be referred to as *CAED*.

[20] *CAED*, 2*LAg* 7, p. 47; *Écrits*, p. 93.

[21] 2*LtF* 53, *FAED* 1, p. 53; *Opuscula*, p. 211.

birth to Christ, she indicates, so too we are born anew and this new birth is life for the Church. She provides a truly feminine understanding of spiritual motherhood by reflecting on the mystery of the human person as a created lover of God. What makes Clare's understanding of spiritual motherhood unique is that she lays out a pattern of spiritual development that leads to this goal. It is a comprehensive and profound path of prayer which is rooted in poverty. It is to this path that we now turn.

Poverty, Prayer and the Path to God

Although Francis spoke of motherhood in his writings, he never elaborated upon this theme other than by indicating that one must be espoused to the Holy Spirit. When we come to the writings of Clare, however, we find a different emphasis. While Clare never specifically mentions the motherhood of Jesus or alludes to the feminine nature of God, her entire spiritual path seems preoccupied with "giving birth" to Christ, becoming—in the words of Marianne Schlosser—mother, sister, bride.[22] Her intense reflection on the life of God in the life of the believer is fundamentally a Marian theme that yields its fruit in bringing the Gospel to life, in the same way that Mary brought the Son of God into the world. What she describes as a spiritual path, therefore, is both intensely personal and mystically corporate, since the path leads not only to union with God but to the completion of Christ's Body in the world.

Clare lived under the Benedictine *Rule* for over forty years; yet, her spiritual path shows little trace of the monastic form but rather is distinctly evangelical insofar as it focuses on the Incarnation and union with Christ. In her letters to Agnes, she begins with the self-emptying love of a crucified God in order to describe the spiritual path to God. She directs Agnes to a nuptial relationship with Christ whereby Agnes is to become the Spouse of her crucified Lover. In her first letter, for example, she writes: "You are the spouse and the mother and the sister of my Lord Jesus Christ. . .who endured the suffering of the cross for us all."[23] Agnes is to welcome into her life

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[22] Marianne Schlosser, "Mother, Sister, Bride: The Spirituality of St. Clare," *Greyfriars Review* 5 (1990), p. 238.

[23] *CAED*, 1*LAg* 12, p. 44; *Écrits*, p. 86.

the God of descending love who became poor and humble in order to embrace her in love.

From the beginning of Clare's letters to Agnes, it is clear that poverty is the key to one's relationship with God. Like Francis, Clare viewed divine revelation as the movement of God to poverty shown in the life of Jesus Christ. She viewed the Incarnation as a coincidence of opposites, a mystery of poverty and riches. The one who is rich in mercy and love bends low in the Incarnation to embrace us in love, and it is in accepting this gift of the poor One that we become rich in God. Clare writes:

> O blessed poverty, who bestows eternal riches on those who love and embrace her! O holy poverty, God promises the kingdom of heaven and, beyond any doubt, reveals eternal glory and blessed life to those who have and desire her! O God-centered poverty, whom the Lord Jesus Christ who ruled and still rules heaven and earth, who spoke and things were made, came down to embrace before all else![24]

The poverty of the Incarnation as the poverty of God signifies to us that God is self-giving and self-gift. God gives everything to us in the gift of the Son, or in Clare's words, the beloved Spouse. She sees the poverty of God most fully expressed in the poverty and humility of the cross; here, the fullness of God's love for us is revealed. She urges Agnes to look at the poverty of God each day. Because the poverty of God is how God reveals himself to us, Clare invites Agnes into a life of poverty following the path of the poor, crucified Spouse. Just as God is revealed in poverty so too Clare indicates that poverty will enable the true humanity of Agnes to be revealed. In Clare's view, poverty makes room for God in whom we find our true identity. Thus Clare invites Agnes to place herself before the "mirror of eternity"—the cross of the poor Crucified—indicating that the crucified Christ is the reflection and splendor of God and the mirror where she will see who she is and what she is called to be.

Because Clare emphasizes the Incarnation as the starting point for union with God, she offers another way than the traditional Neoplatonic ascent which characterizes monastic spirituality. The Neoplatonic ladder of ascent is a movement away from the world, rising above natural, sensible things as if they were inferior and in

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[24] *CAED*, 1*LAg* 15–17, pp. 44–45; *Écrits*, p. 86.

some sense, not truly real.[25] The emphasis of spirit over matter according to a hierarchy of being is an intellectualizing of mystical experience.[26] In this respect, the Neoplatonic tradition with its insistence on inner illumination and mental ascent diminishes the natural goodness of the created world; rather, the created world should motivate one to turn inward in the search for God.

The Neoplatonic ascent that invaded monasticism was a direct descendent of the Greek ideal of pagan contemplative life, a life of spiritual transcendence in the pursuit of the One or ultimate source of reality. Early Christian monastic writers spoke of prayer as the basis of the perfect life and the path to the kingdom of heaven. Evagrius Ponticus, a disciple of Origen of Alexandria, said that prayer is a communing of the mind with God. One must strive for solitude of spirit so that one may be wholly attentive to God.[27] The contemporary spiritual writer Jean Leclercq claimed that the Jerusalem above is the end the monk strives for. It is the place where far from the world and from sin, one draws close to God, the angels and the saints who surround him.[28] The life of the monk here below, therefore, anticipates the life of heaven where the angels enjoy the vision of God. For monastic spiritual writers, in general, contemplation could only be attained in the monastery because it anticipated union with God in heaven. To strive for such union entailed a listening in silence and solitude, to be alone in the presence of the transcendent One. The busy marketplace of the world with its winding paths of sin could only be an obstacle to union with God. While both Clare and Francis left the world to pursue God insofar as they abandoned their status, wealth, and security, never did they renounce the world for the sake of God. Rather, they realized that the created world was the true cloister of God.

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[25] Sean Edward Kinsella, "How Great a Gladness: Some Thoughts on Francis of Assisi and the Natural World," *Studies in Spirituality* 12 (2002), p. 66. According to Plato's Allegory of the Cave, which was very influential on the structure of Neoplatonism, sensible reality is comprised of ersatz forms while the true forms lie in a transcendent, spiritual world.

[26] Kinsella, "How Great a Gladness," p. 90; Ewert Cousins, "Francis of Assisi: Christian Mysticism at the Crossroads," in *Mysticism and Religious Traditions*, ed. S. Katz (New York, 1983), pp. 164–165.

[27] Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys* (Oxford, 1981), p. 111.

[28] Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*, trans. Catherine Misrahi (New York, 1982), pp. 55–56.

Whereas the Neoplatonic ascent is represented by the image of a ladder, an appropriate image for Clare's journey is that of the spiral, one that goes to the depth of the human person's capacity for God and the capacity of God's love for the human person. Clare did not view prayer as climbing a ladder to God but awakening to the love of God made visible in the crucified Christ, the Spouse of the soul. While the monastic path entailed a transcendence of the material world, Clare did not transcend the material world to seek God but rather found God in the poverty of the crucified Christ, that is, the wounded and glorified Christ. She did not look to the transcendent God of heaven but realized that heaven has been revealed: God has come to us. Christ is the pledge of God's love for us, she indicated, "in whose embrace we are already caught up."[29] The self-emptying of God—to be God for us—formed the basis of Clare's mysticism. She indicated to Agnes that if she is to be spouse, mother and sister of Christ, she must be prepared, like the womb of the Virgin, to receive Christ within her. She wrote: "The foxes have dens, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man, Christ, has nowhere to lay his head."[30]

Throughout her writings, we see that Clare's spirituality is a deepening of relationship with God by which we discover our lives in God and God's life in us. This deepening of God's life within us discloses the image of God in which we are created. We discover, in Clare's words, "the incomparable treasure hidden in the field of the world and of the human heart."[31] Relationship with God, therefore, does not mean transcending the material world to attain union but accepting God within us as fragile human persons and attaining unity with God in such a way that God takes on life anew in the believer. It is awakening to the presence of God in our lives. Prayer enables us to discover what we already have, the potential for the fullness of life, and this life is the life of Christ.

One can distinguish Clare's spiritual path by comparing it to the fourfold stages described by the Carthusian monk, Guigo II. In his *Scala Claustralium*, Guigo described prayer as a spiritual progression

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[29] *CAED*, 1*LAg* 10, p. 44; *Écrits*, p. 85.
[30] *CAED*, 1*LAg* 18, p. 45; *Écrits*, p. 87.
[31] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 7, p. 50; *Écrits*, p. 102. The same idea is found in Bonaventure's *Soul's Journey into God* where he describes a movement inward to the center of the soul where we discover the image of God as the image of Christ crucified.

that leads to union through the four stages of reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation. These stages form a ladder by which the monk could be lifted from earth to heaven. He summarized these stages as follows:

> *Reading* is the careful study of the Scriptures, concentrating all one's powers on it. *Meditation* is the busy application of the mind to seek with the help of one's own reason for knowledge of hidden truth. *Prayer* is the heart's devoted turning to God to drive away evil and obtain what is good. *Contemplation* is when the mind is in some sort lifted up to God and held above itself, so that it tastes the joys of everlasting sweetness.[32]

Guigo defined the functions of the steps of prayer with a decided emphasis on the rational character of the process. The careful investigation of the Scriptures requires the attention of the mind. Meditation is the studious action of the mind, investigating the knowledge of hidden truth under the impetus of one's reason. Prayer is defined in terms of the heart, and contemplation is the elevation of the mind to God.[33] The ideal of the monk, therefore, is to strive for unceasing prayer, to "pray always." The prayerful reading of Scripture [*lectio divina*] and the pursuit of contemplation, together with the Liturgy of the Hours, were to aim toward this goal.[34]

Whereas Guigo begins with the prayerful reading of the Scriptures (*lectio divina*), Clare begins with the humanity of Christ, the Word incarnate, especially as that Word appears to us in the crucified Christ. She begins her journey, therefore, not with self-reflection on the Word of God, as in the monastic *lectio divina*, but with encountering the living Word of God visibly seen in the cross, in the poor crucified Christ. Hers is an evangelical *lectio divina*. Face to face with a God of unconditional love, she realizes that only the person who is poor and dispossessed, the one who "chooses the things of heaven for the goods of the earth," can freely accept the Word of God as

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[32] Guigo II, *The Ladder of Monks and Twelve Meditations*, trans. and intro. Edmund Colledge and James Walsh (Kalamazoo, 1981), p. 68.

[33] Keith Egan, "Guigo II: The Theology of the Contemplative Life," in *The Spirituality of Western Christendom*, ed. E. Rozanne Elder (Kalamazoo, 1976), pp. 111–112.

[34] For a discussion of *lectio divina* see Gerard MacGinty, "Lectio Divina: Fount and Guide of the Spiritual Life," *Cistercian Studies* 21 (1986), pp. 64–71; Monica Sandor, "Lectio Divina and the Monastic Spirituality of Reading," *American Benedictine Review* 40 (1989), pp. 82–114.

the Word of life; thus, she praises Agnes for exchanging her earthly riches for the riches of heaven. Clare lays out her path to God in a fourfold manner that can be likened to the monastic *lectio divina*, yet clearly differs from it.[35] She advises Agnes to gaze upon the crucified Spouse and by gaze she means seeing, considering and loving the God who comes to us in Christ as she writes: "O most noble Queen, gaze upon [Him], consider [Him], contemplate [Him], as you desire to imitate [Him]."[36] We can compare her path to the four stages of Guigo:

Guigo	Clare
Reading of Scripture (*lectio*)	Gaze upon the cross (*intueri*)
Meditation (*meditatio*)	Consider (*considerare*)
Prayer (*oratio*)	Contemplate (*contemplari*)
Contemplate (*contemplatio*)	Imitate (*imitare*)[37]

Clare's path to God is visual and sensory whereas Guigo's is more intellectual. Clare begins with encounter and ends with embrace whereas Guigo begins with self-reflection and ends with spiritual union which is intellectual in nature. Clare's starting point of prayer reminds us of Francis's encounter with the crucified Christ at San Damiano. According to Thomas of Celano, Francis walked into the church of San Damiano one day and knelt before the crucifix. He then heard the words, "Francis, go rebuild my house; as you see, it is all being destroyed."[38] Celano indicates from that moment on Francis was filled with compassion for the Crucified. "He wept loudly," Celano writes, "as if it [the Passion of Christ] were constantly before his eyes."[39] It is difficult to say exactly what happened to Francis in his encounter with the crucified Christ. However, it is reasonable to suggest that seeing the passion of Christ in a type of penetrating gaze which disclosed the divine reality hidden behind the veil of flesh, enabled Francis to hear God speak to him. Similarly, Clare directs Agnes to search the depths of God with a type of pen-

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[35] See Edith Van den Goorbergh, "Clare's Prayer as Spiritual Journey," *Greyfriars Review* 10.3 (1996), pp. 283–292.

[36] *CAED*, 2*LAg* 20, p. 49; *Écrits*, p. 96.

[37] For a more detailed explanation of these schemes, see Ilia Delio, *Franciscan Prayer* (Cincinnati, 2004), pp. 2–9.

[38] *2C* 6.10, *FAED* 2, p. 249.

[39] *2C* 6.10, *FAED* 2, p. 250.

etrating gaze, as God is revealed in the fragile human flesh of the crucified Christ.

To gaze is not simply to see. Rather to gaze is to be drawn into the object which one sees. Delir Brunelli states that "when she (Clare) says "look," she also means "touch," "listen," "experiment," perceive the essence and flavor of the One who loves us. Clare invites Agnes to look at the Spouse's bruised and violated beauty (1*LAg* 9; 2*LAg* 19; 3*LAg* 16; 4*LAg* 10), and embrace him (2*LAg* 18), touch him (2*LAg* 18) and perceive his fragrance (4*LAg* 13), hear his voice (4*LAg* 24–26) and taste the hidden sweetness which his friends experience (3*LAg* 14)."[40] We may liken a gaze to a visual experience of embrace. In his book *Exclusion and Embrace* Miroslav Volf describes a "phenomenology of embrace" that may help us understand the power of gazing. An embrace, Volf writes, begins with opening the arms. "Open arms are a gesture of the body reaching for the other. They are a sign of discontent with my own self-enclosed identity and a code of desire for the other. I do not want to be myself only; I want the other to be part of who I am and I want to be part of the other."[41] A self that is "full of itself" can neither receive the other nor make genuine movement toward the other.[42] Open arms signify that I have "created space in myself for the other to come in and that I have made a movement out of myself so as to enter the space created by the other."[43] Volf indicates, however, that one does not stop at the embrace for the embrace is not to make two bodies one; it is not meant to dissolve one body into the other. If the embrace is not to cancel itself, therefore, the arms must open again; this preserves the genuine identity of each subject of the embrace.[44] Nor should we try to understand the other if we are to preserve the alterity or genuine identity of the other in the embrace. If we try to understand the other on our own terms, we make the other into a projection of ourselves or try to absorb the other into ourselves. A genuine embrace entails the ability-not-to-understand but to accept

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[40] See Delir Brunelli, "'Contemplation in the Following of Jesus Christ' The Experience of Clare of Assisi," *The Cord* 52.4 (2002), pp. 156–161.

[41] Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville, 1996), p. 141.

[42] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, p. 141.

[43] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, p. 142.

[44] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, p. 144.

the other as a question right in the midst of the embrace, and to let go, allowing the question of the other to remain mystery.[45] Only in this way do we allow the other to be gift and receptivity.

Volf's phenomenology of embrace helps us understand Clare's direction to Agnes to gaze on the crucified Spouse. The gaze on the crucified Christ is like an embrace, a desire to allow the otherness of God's love into our lives. Therefore it can never be an immediate vision; rather, it is a daily encounter with a God of humble love who is hidden in fragile humanity. Gazing is not simply physical sight like other physical senses that help situate oneself in an environment. Rather, gazing is of the heart by which the heart "opens its arms" so to speak to allow the Spirit of God's love to enter. Gazing requires a space within the heart to receive what we see and to "embrace" what we see. Poverty helps create this space because when we are free of things that possess us or that we possess we are able to see more clearly and to receive what we see within us.

The type of prayer that Clare directs us to—this prayer of gazing—requires openness to grace. To gaze is to be open to the Spirit of the Lord, for it is the Spirit within us who really gazes or, we might say, who "embraces" the God of humble love. In her second letter Clare writes: "may you go forward securely, joyfully, and swiftly, on the path of prudent happiness . . . in the pursuit of that perfection to which the Spirit of the Lord has called you."[46] It is the Spirit who joins us to Christ and leads us into the embrace of the humble love of God. Gazing is a matter of the Spirit. If the gaze that leads to transforming love is of the Spirit, then prayer must enable receptivity to the Spirit, that is, openness to the Spirit. Poverty is that spirit of dispossessiveness that enables the Spirit of the Lord to breathe within the life of the believer. We are called to be poor so that we may grow rich in this Spirit who joins us to Christ and leads us into the embrace of God's humble love.

Gazing upon the beloved should lead to the friendship of Christ, that is, a sharing in the sufferings of Christ. To be a friend of Christ, according to Clare, is to begin to feel what he suffered and to be able to suffer with him, in his rejection by others, in the wounds that he bears. Consideration of the crucified Spouse is to lead one

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[45] For an explanation of embrace and not-understanding, see Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, pp. 145–156.

[46] *CAED*, 2*LAg* 13–14, p. 48; *Écrits*, p. 95.

to consider one's own participation in Christ's sufferings. How do we crucify others? What keeps us nailed to the cross? Do we come freely to the cross or do we allow others to crucify us? Do we reject the cross and the place of death in our lives?

While friendship with the crucified Christ is a type of meditation for Clare, it is also a deepening of relationship that leads to contemplation, dwelling in the mystery of God, and becoming one with the Spouse in this dwelling. Clare does not ascribe to a type of mental transcendence in pursuit of God. Contemplation is not climbing a ladder to God but a gazing upon the otherness of God in such a way that ultimately one is drawn into the other. The gaze of the other becomes a means of self-reflection. The more one gazes upon the incarnate Word of God, the more one discovers the truth of oneself in God and, we might say, God in oneself. Contemplation, as Michael Blastic notes, "is the means for discovering the truly human without disguise."[47] Gazing on the crucified Spouse is ultimately to lead to imitation of the Spouse (*imitatio Christi*). Imitation is not a literal mimicking of Christ; rather, it means becoming the image of the beloved, an image disclosed through transformation. The goal of prayer, therefore, is to be transformed into the image of the crucified Spouse. This means we are to become vessels of God's compassionate love for others. Clare's spiritual path begins with the gaze of the Crucified then moves inward toward self-reflection, identity and transformation, and finally outwards so that we may radiate God's face to the world. Her mysticism of transformation is a "mysticism of motherhood"[48] because the one who arrives at union with God through prayer brings Christ to birth anew; Christ comes alive in the life of the believer.

Because poverty is the key to life in God insofar as it enables receptivity to the Spirit of God, poverty is the key to spiritual transformation. Although the poor person open to love is open to the presence of the living God, Clare is also aware of the brokenness of

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[47] Michael Blastic describes this phenomenological type of contemplation as distinctive of both Francis and Clare's path of contemplation. See Michael W. Blastic, "Contemplation and Compassion: A Franciscan Ministerial Spirituality," in *Spirit and Life: A Journal of Contemporary Franciscanism*, vol. 7, ed. Anthony Carrozzo, Vincent Cushing and Kenneth Himes (New York, 1997), p. 165.

[48] I am indebted to Delir Brunelli for the insightful term "mysticism of maternity" which I have modified to "mysticism of motherhood." See Brunelli, "Contemplation in the Following of Jesus Christ," p. 167.

the human person and therefore the difficulty of relationship with God. She grapples with the fact that the human person has the capacity for God but is thwarted in this capacity because of sin. "It is now clear," she writes, "that the soul of a faithful person, the most worthy of all creatures because of the grace of God . . . is greater than heaven itself."[49] This capacity for God, she indicates, can only be realized by following Christ in poverty and humility.[50] Pride, she says, leads to self-deception; how many kings and queens of this world let themselves be deceived! "For even though their pride may reach the skies and their heads touch the clouds, in the end they are as forgotten as a dung-heap!"[51] Self-centeredness, in Clare's view, is overcome through poverty which, she claims, is the highest priority of the Christian vocation. When we are poor we are dispossessed of all that prevents us from being truly human, and it is in becoming truly human that the glory of God is revealed. The poor person who is open to the Spirit of God is free to love, and the way one loves reflects the beauty of God in the world, for love is the form of God's beauty. To penetrate the truth of this reality, we must first penetrate the truth of who we are with our fragile tendencies and weaknesses. If prayer begins with the gaze on the crucified Spouse, it must also lead us to the truth of ourselves in God.

For Clare, poverty is the basis of our movement into God. We cannot really gaze on the crucified Christ unless we are poor persons. Poverty in prayer is difficult but if we gaze daily upon the God of descending love, the God who comes to us in poverty and humility, then we can begin to be detached from the multiplicity of things in our lives and move toward the simplicity of the gaze. The prayer of gazing means that God becomes less an idol of our own projections [needs and desires] and more of an icon of infinite love piercing through finite reality.[52] Poverty invites us to go beyond ourselves,

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[49] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 21, p. 52; *Écrits*, p. 104.

[50] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 25, p. 52; *Écrits*, p. 106.

[51] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 27–28, p. 52; *Écrits*, p. 106. Francis of Assisi had similar admonitions to his followers. See, for example, *Adm* 7, *FAED* 1, p. 132; *Opuscula*, p. 110.

[52] This notion of gazing resonates with some postmodern thinkers today, especially those who are trying to move beyond onto-theology. For a discussion on God as idol or icon see Jean Luc Marion, *God Without Being*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson (Chicago, 1991), pp. 7–11; Xavier John Seubert, "Sacramentality—Icon or Idol?" in *Franciscan Identity and Postmodern Culture*, ed. Kathleen A. Warren (New York, 2002), pp. 73–94.

by taking from us everything on which we might tend to lean on. It is not a matter of simply being poor but of having nothing which can prevent us from being wholly open to the grace of God. The practice of poverty, therefore, is the condition and sign of our openness to the mystery of God.

In Clare's view, poverty allows our full humanity to shine out because the poor person is one who is dependent on another; poverty is the basis of relationship with God and thus of personhood. It is the privileged existential position in which all aspects of reality are brought to an essential fullness of being. Poverty opens the window of the human heart to the love of the Holy Spirit, and it is this love which unveils the beauty of the divine image within the human person. By gazing upon the crucified Christ, one is led not only to the poverty of being human but one is able to recognize the truth of one's being, one's smallness in relation to God's infinite greatness and love. Because poverty provides the space within the human heart for the indwelling of God, it is the condition for openness and receptivity to God, the starting point of our journey into God. As Clare will expound in her letters to Agnes, poverty is the foundation for contemplation and union with God because poverty creates a space within so that God may be born anew.

Clare's spiritual path of poverty in union with God is one that enables the Gospel to become a living Word of God in the believer. In the empty openness of the heart yearning for God, God descends anew and "takes on flesh" in one's life through the love of the Holy Spirit. Only when we become truly ourselves in union with the Spouse can we radiate Christ's love to others.

Contemplation, Transformation and *Imitatio Christi*

The relationship between poverty and contemplation is fundamental to Clare's spiritual path, and in her third and fourth letters to Agnes she tries to expound this path as a relationship of love with the crucified Christ. Poverty and humility in Clare's view make room for love, and love is that indwelling of the Spirit that allows us to search the depths of the crucified Spouse who reveals the face of God through the suffering of the cross. Clare describes relationship with God as a spiritual energy of love and she sees contemplation as a deepening of love whereby Agnes is to "totally love Him who

gave Himself totally for your love."[53] The progression of prayer that leads to contemplation begins with the gaze on the crucified Christ and continues to penetrate the depths of this reality until the margins of poverty and humility give way to the heart of charity which is hidden in the heart of Christ. As a deepening of love, contemplation is a continuous action, an ongoing transformation, since nothing is more liberating and active than love. This love not only enables one like Agnes to see more clearly and deeply into the depths of the Spouse's love for her, but to feel[54] and taste the hidden sweetness of God.[55] To penetrate the truth of this reality, however, one must first penetrate the truth of one's own being with its fragile tendencies and weaknesses.

For Clare, the cross is where we come to know God and ourselves in God. A life of poverty and humility, following the example of the crucified Christ, can lead one, like Agnes, to take hold of the treasure within the human heart (3*LAg* 7) which is the Word of God, in whom we are created. Clare directs Agnes to a life of contemplation by discovering her true image in the cross. She writes:

> Place your mind before the mirror of eternity!
> Place your soul in the brilliance of glory.
> Place your heart in the figure of the divine substance!
> and, through contemplation,
> Transform your entire being into the image
> of the Godhead itself.[56]

The idea of contemplation as an indwelling in the mystery of the Crucified is unique to Clare. Contemplation begins with the gaze on Christ crucified and is the penetrating gaze that accepts the disclosure of God in the fragile human flesh of the other, that is, the crucified Christ. Her understanding of contemplation complements that of Francis who described contemplation as "seeing with the eyes of the Spirit." In his *Admonition One* Francis wrote: "As they saw only his flesh by means of their bodily sight, yet believed him to be God as they contemplated him with the eyes of faith, so as we see bread

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[53] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 15, p. 51; *Écrits*, p. 104.

[54] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 14, p. 51; *Écrits*, p. 103. Clare writes: "So that you too may feel what His friends feel in tasting *the hidden sweetness* that, from the beginning, God Himself has reserved for his lovers."

[55] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 14, p. 51; *Écrits*, p. 103.

[56] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 12–13, p. 51; *Écrits*, p. 103.

and wine with our bodily eyes, we too are to see and firmly believe them to be his most holy body and blood living and true."[57] The key to contemplation is the Spirit of the Lord. One must have the Spirit of the Lord (who joins one to Christ)[58] to see into the depths of things.[59]

In the same way, Clare sees that the Spirit searches the depths of the human heart through the mirror of the cross. The mirror of the Crucified tells us how we are most like God in this world through suffering, poverty, and humility, and what we do to God in this world—crucify him. In this mirror, therefore, we see the greatness of the human capacity to love and the sorrow of human sinfulness. If contemplation is a penetrating truth of reality, it must first lead one to the truth of one's self in God. The cross, therefore, indicates to us the true image of ourselves, and the image we need to gaze upon within ourselves—our own poverty, humility and suffering. To place oneself in the mirror of the cross is to expose oneself to the joys and sorrows of being human, the joy of God's all-embracing love and the sorrow of seeing the Spouse "despised, struck, and scourged."[60] In the mirror of the cross we are to place our entire being—heart, mind, and soul—and to "transform our whole being into the image of the Godhead itself."[61] Poverty, humility and charity are the "footprints of Christ" according to Clare and we are called to find these footprints within the depths of our own being, for these footprints reflect the image of God.

Clare describes the image of the crucified Christ as a "mirror" and she advises Agnes to "place your mind before the mirror of eternity."[62] For Clare, Christ is the mirror where God reveals himself

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[57] *Adm* 1, *FAED* 1, p. 129; *Opuscula*, p. 107.

[58] Again, Francis gave primacy to the Spirit of the Lord as the one who makes life in Christ possible. In his *Letter to the Faithful* he writes: "We are spouses when the faithful soul united by the Holy Spirit to our Lord Jesus Christ." See *LtF* 51, *FAED* 1, p. 49; *Opuscula*, p. 211.

[59] The notion of penetrating vision is characteristic of Franciscan contemplation. Bonaventure used the term "contuition" to describe this penetrating vision which sees a thing in itself and in its relation to God. For a definition of contuition see Ilia Delio, *Simply Bonaventure: An Introduction to His Life, Thought, and Writings* (New York, 2001), p. 199.

[60] *CAED*, 2*LAg* 20, p. 49; *Écrits*, p. 96. Clare writes: "Your Spouse . . . was despised, struck, scourged untold times throughout his entire body, and then died amidst the sufferings of the Cross."

[61] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 13, p. 51; *Écrits*, p. 102.

[62] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 12, p. 51; *Écrits*, p. 103. For a more detailed examination of

to us and we are revealed to ourselves, as we begin to see the truth of who we are—our identity—in the mirror of the cross. The gaze in the mirror of the cross, therefore, is both a looking at and receptivity to the appearance of God's self-giving love in the concrete figure of the crucified Christ. In its receptivity, the gaze is self-reflective because the God who is revealed in the crucified Christ is the image in which we are created and thus the basis of our identity.[63] The more we contemplate Christ [by gazing upon the Crucified], the more we discover our identity. Contemplation is creative since it transforms the one who gazes in the mirror into a reflection of the image itself. That is, the more we contemplate Christ, the more we discover and come to resemble the image of God. This image of God, brought to light in the one who gazes into the mirror of Christ, is expressed as a new "birth" of Christ in the believer.

The relationship between contemplation and identity is described more explicitly [although briefly] in Clare's fourth letter to Agnes where she advises Agnes to "gaze upon that mirror each day . . . and continually study your face in it, that you may adorn yourself completely within and without."[64] The relationship between contemplation and the human face is an interesting one. The idea of the "face" not only connotes uniqueness and distinction, that which makes a person what s/he is, but it connotes form or expression since the face is what one sees. The face discloses the person in a particular way and therefore reflects one's personal identity or self-expression.[65]

Clare and mirror spirituality, see Regis J. Armstrong, "Clare of Assisi: The Mirror Mystic," *The Cord* (July–August, 1985), pp. 195–202.

[63] See Ilia Delio, "Clare of Assisi: Beauty and Transformation," *Studies in Spirituality* 12 (2002), p. 75.

[64] *CAED*, 4 *LAg* 14–16, p. 55; *Écrits*, pp. 112–114. See Delio, "Clare of Assisi: Beauty and Transformation," p. 75.

[65] The postmodern philosopher Emmanuel Levinas claims that the face of the genuine other should release us from all desire for totality and open us to a true sense of the infinite because inscribed in the face of the other is the trace of transcendence. One cannot grasp the other in knowledge, for the other is infinite and overflows in the totality of comprehension and of being. See Edith Wsychogrod, *Saints and Postmodernism: Revisioning Moral Philosophy* (Chicago, 1990), p. 148; Robyn Horner, *Rethinking God as Gift: Marion, Derrida and the Limits of Phenomenology* (New York, 2001), pp. 64–66. On another note, the face, as reflective of personhood, relates to the Greek word for "person," *prosopon*, which technically referred to the mask the actor wore in the theater. The mask both revealed the identity of the character yet concealed the identity of the actor. See Joseph Koterski, "Boethius and the Theological Origins of the Concept of Person," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 78.2 (Fall 2004), p. 203.

If contemplation is to study one's face in the mirror of the cross then contemplation is the way the self achieves its true form as image of God. To study one's face in the cross is to ask, what am I? In this respect, the self is not a substance separate from God but is created precisely in relationship to God. In Clare's view, identity is uncovering the treasure within, the image of God in which we are created and by which we are in relationship with God. Identity, therefore, is the creation of the self as image of God, creation itself being in relationship with God. Prayer that leads to contemplation of the crucified Spouse leads to an ongoing creation of self whereby the emergence of who we are in the mirror of the Crucified is expressed in what we become [our "face"] and in the virtues we acquire both "within and without." As we come to be who we are called to be in relation to God (self-identity), God shows himself to the universe through his constant and continual creation of the self. The self that comes to be through a union with God in love is the self in which God is reflected, that is, the image of God. For Clare, this is imitation of Christ, the crucified Spouse. The enfleshment of God in one's life through contemplation and transformation is the renewal of Christ in the world.

While Clare's path entails a truthful relationship with God, it also involves a truthful relationship with one's neighbor for her spiritual path takes place in the context of community. In this respect, gazing upon the mirror of the Crucified is not an exclusive human-divine relationship, that is, a vertical relationship with a transcendent God. Rather, the divine is enfleshed in the other—immanent—so that to follow Christ is to follow the one who follows Christ, and to see oneself in the mirror of the Crucified is to see oneself in the face of one's suffering sisters or brothers. Clare's path is essentially Pauline (1 Cor 11: "imitate me as I imitate Christ") and she directs Agnes to the fullness of being through relationship with a God who is enfleshed in fragile humanity, that is, the humanity of community.[66] For Clare, prayer without community cannot lead to the fullness of one's self-identity, since it is in community that the mirror of one's identity is reflected in the other, the neighbor who we are called to

[66] For a discussion on the following of Christ in the context of community for Clare see Ilia Delio, "Mirrors and Footprints: Metaphors of Relationship in Clare of Assisi's Writings," *Studies in Spirituality* 10 (2000), pp. 167–181.

love. Love transforms because it unites, and it is in loving our neighbor through compassion that we become more ourselves, and in becoming more ourselves, we become Christ.

Although Clare sought a unity with God through contemplation with the crucified Spouse, union was not the goal of relationship with God; rather, the goal was imitation (cf. 2*LAg* 20). The gaze on the crucified Spouse is to lead to imitation of the Spouse. We become what we love and who we love shapes what we become. Imitation is not a literal mimicking of Christ; rather, it means becoming the image of the beloved, an image disclosed through transformation. We might say that, for Clare, we are transformed as we are conformed to Christ. The purpose of transformation is imitation of Christ, and the way to this imitation includes contemplation which means coming to the truth of who we are in the cross. Although the cross is central in Clare's spirituality, we must emphasize that hers is not a spirituality of sin and guilt; rather it is one of freedom and transformation. The cross is the mirror of truth, where we come to see ourselves in our capacity to love and in our brokenness. An honest acceptance of who we are with our strengths and weaknesses is liberating in Clare's view. Dwelling in the mirror of the crucified Christ is to lead to that place of inner freedom, a freedom that is born of the joy of the Spirit (4*LAg* 4) and of union with the Spouse (4*LAg* 10). Clare advises Agnes to "study her face in the mirror each day" (4*LAg* 14) so that she may be "adorned with beautiful robes within and without" (v. 16), becoming transformed in union with the one she loves. Clare does not use the language of transformation per se because to be adorned within and without is to "put on Christ" or to "re-present Christ," that is, transformation *is* imitation. The relationship of the mirror and self-identity which Clare describes in her fourth letter corresponds to the method of gazing upon the Crucified which she describes in her second letter. A consistent gaze on the crucified Spouse ultimately leads to imitation, (cf. 2*LAg* 20) for when we cling to the crucified Spouse with all our heart we become an image of this Spouse in our own lives. What Clare indicates is that transformation/imitation of Christ cannot take place apart from self-identity or acceptance of one's self in relation to God.

For Clare, contemplation is intertwined with imitation. The more we allow ourselves to be transformed by the Spirit of love, the more we become ourselves, and the more we become ourselves, the more we are like God. Each of us is created in a unique way to express the

love of God in the world and to show the face of God to the world. The integral relationship between self-identity and *imitatio Christi* through contemplation is a path of transformation by which love draws forth the image in which we are created, an image which is made beautiful through the cross of suffering and love. As one comes to a deeper truth of oneself in God, so too, one is filled with the Spirit of God. It is the Spirit that allows one to contemplate the other by a penetrating gaze in such a way that one can see the love of God hidden in otherwise suffering humanity. In light of this relationship Clare writes: "Therefore that mirror suspended on the wood of the cross, warned those passing by that here are things to be considered, saying: '*All you who pass by the way, look and see if there is any suffering like my suffering*!'" (*Lam* 1:12)[67] It is difficult to see another person's suffering if we have not come to terms with our own suffering. We cannot see clearly the truth of the other if we have not first seen clearly the truth of ourselves. The relationship between "seeing" and "becoming" is governed by love since love shapes what we become. As one sees the sufferings of Christ, so one is to love. Clare therefore urges Agnes: "O Queen of our heavenly King, may you, therefore, be inflamed ever more strongly with the fire of love!"[68] What Clare suggests is that contemplation is not a preliminary step to transformation/imitation but rather one must strive to be transformed in Christ in order to contemplate Christ. As the believer contemplates and is transformed in Christ, the ability to love Christ in the midst of suffering is made possible because God is seen in the depths of the human person. The mutual relationship between contemplation and transformation governed by self-identity involves self-acceptance and self-awareness or, we might say, accepting the poverty of our human condition. Contemplation deepens as we continue to be transformed in Christ by coming to the truth of our identity. When we accept our humanity in God, with its strengths and weaknesses, then we come to love in a deeper way, a way that reflects more visibly the face of God.

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[67] *CAED*, 4*LAg* 25, p. 56; *Écrits*, p. 114.
[68] *CAED*, 4*LAg* 27, p. 57; *Écrits*, p. 116.

Motherhood, Mary and the Body of Christ

There is no doubt that Clare's direction to Agnes, to become an image of Christ by imitating Christ, was quite bold for her time, since the idea that women could image God was a source of contention among medieval writers. Clare, however, was not concerned about gender issues but about Christian life and participation in the Church. We might say, in her view, everyone who follows Christ is called to "put on" Christ (Gal 3:27). As Brunelli points out, "Clare's contemplation has, in its own fiber, the dimension of witness, commitment, and the proclamation of the Gospel. Whoever is transformed in the mirror of Christ, by this fact alone, radiates and manifests his image."[69] Contemplation, therefore, is related to witness and the one who contemplates Christ bears witness to the risen Lord.

It is within this matrix of contemplation and transformation that Clare's mysticism of motherhood takes shape. To contemplate Christ and be transformed is to bear witness to Christ and thus to allow the life of Christ to shine through in the life of the believer. Clare holds up Mary, the Mother of God, as the model of her mystical path, indicating to Agnes that she should "cling to his most sweet mother who gave birth to a Son whom the heavens could not contain."[70] In her third letter she states that the soul of a faithful person, like Mary, is "greater than heaven itself, since the heavens and the rest of creation cannot contain their Creator; only the faithful soul is his dwelling place and throne."[71] She highlights the capacity of the human soul to bear God because the one who is joined to Christ by the Spirit is one in whom the Trinity dwells (3*LAg* 3). Poverty and humility make possible this indwelling of God in such a way that one, like Agnes, can ultimate come to possess God, insofar as a human person can possess God in this earthly life (3*LAg* 26). She continues by saying: "As the glorious Virgin of virgins carried (Him) materially, so you, too, by following in her footprints, especially those of poverty and humility, can, without any doubt, always carry him spiritually in your chaste and virginal body, holding Him by whom you and all things are held together (Wis 1:7)."[72]

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[69] Brunelli, "Contemplation of the Following of Jesus Christ," p. 167.
[70] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 18, p. 51; *Écrits*, p. 104.
[71] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 21–22, p. 52; *Écrits*, p. 104.
[72] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 24–26, p. 52; *Écrits*, p. 106.

What profound insight from a woman of deep prayer, that the Creator of all can be held within the finite space of the human heart! Who can possess God unless one is so intimately united with God that God's life becomes our life and our life is God's life? I would suggest that Clare's mysticism of motherhood cannot be separated from her bridal mysticism. The one who gives birth to Christ is so intimately joined to Christ as spouse that one shares in the sacred banquet of love. In her fourth letter she writes: "Happy, indeed, is she to whom it is given to drink at this sacred banquet so that she might cling with her whole heart to him whose beauty all the blessed hosts of heaven unceasingly admire."[73] Clare's language of intimacy is telling—to "cling" and "possess" is to come to such a union with Christ that the life of Christ is virtually inextricable from the life of the believer. Spousal union with Christ is the basis of mystical motherhood. To give birth to Jesus in one's life one must first be joined to Christ as spouse, indicating that the one who possesses God is so united to God that she or he is one with God. The union is such that there is really only one life, the life of God enfleshed in the believer. For Clare, this is to become, like Mary, a new *Theotokos* or God-bearer. The one who "bears God" gives witness to Christ because God has taken on flesh anew in life of the faithful person. Christ is born anew.

While Clare's mysticism of motherhood is "bringing Christ to life for the life of the world,"[74] it is at the same time, a participation in the life of the Church. Although Clare never speaks of the Eucharist in her letters, one can draw a parallel between her mysticism of motherhood, "birthing" Christ, and the Body of Christ. Simply put, one who gives birth to Christ in love becomes a new body of Christ which expresses itself in the fervor of compassionate love. The one who is espoused to Christ is willing to persevere in love through the suffering of the cross because contemplation of the beloved ensures the victory of love. In her fourth letter Clare writes: "Therefore, that Mirror suspended on the wood of the Cross urged those who passed by to consider, saying *All you who pass by the way, look and see if there is any suffering like my suffering*. . . . O Queen of our heavenly King, let yourself be inflamed more strongly with the fervor of charity."[75]

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[73] *CAED*, 4*LAg* 9, p. 54; *Écrits*, p. 110.
[74] Brunelli, "Contemplation in the Following of Jesus Christ," p. 67.
[75] *CAED*, 4*LAg* 24, 27, pp. 56–57; *Écrits*, pp. 104–106.

Although Clare does not use the language of Eucharist in her letters to Agnes, the type of love that she describes is a eucharistic love, a love given totally for the sake of the other, which makes one a vital member of Christ's Body, the Church. Clare urged Agnes to pursue this path in love which leads to union because only in this way could she help rebuild the Church by strengthening the Body of Christ through her own life. As Clare wrote: "I judge you to be a *co-worker* of God Himself and a support for the weak members of His ineffable Body."[76] What remarkable insight from a woman who lived most of her life separated from the world—namely—to live a eucharistic life is to become the Body of Christ in one's own life and thus to become a vital participant in the life of the Church.

We may expound Clare's insight by saying when the Body of Christ becomes the body of the believer, that is, when one is inflamed like Christ crucified with the fervor of charity (*4LAg* 27), then one is willing to offer one's life for the sake of the Gospel. The lover becomes, like the beloved, cruciform in love. Clare's own expression of cruciform love is reflected in the defense of her monastery against the Saracens, as recounted in her *Process of Canonization*. According to the ninth witness, Sister Francesca, as the Saracens were approaching the monastery, the Body of Christ was brought to Clare who offered herself as a victim in defense of her sisters' lives and of the city itself. The witness states:

> When the Saracens entered the cloister of the said monastery, the Lady made them bring her to the entrance of the refectory and bring a small box where there was the Blessed Sacrament of the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Throwing herself prostrate on the ground in prayer, she begged with tears, saying among other things: "Lord, look upon these servants of yours, because I cannot protect them." Then the witness heard a voice of wonderful sweetness: "I will always defend you!" The Lady then prayed for the city saying: "Lord, please defend the city as well!" The same voice resounded and said: "The city will endure many dangers, but it will be defended." Then the Lady turned to the sisters and told them: "Do not be afraid, because I am a hostage for you so that you will not suffer any harm now nor any other time as long as you wish to obey God's commandments." Then the Saracens left in such a way that they did not do any harm or damage.[77]

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[76] *CAED*, 3*LAg* 8, p. 50; *Écrits*, p. 102.
[77] *CAED*, *PC* 9.2, pp. 174–175.

This testimony is important not only for the holiness of Clare's life but for bearing witness to the importance of the Eucharist—not in a devotional way—but in her way of life. It is significant that, after the Body of Christ was brought to Clare, she prostrated herself in prayer and declared herself a hostage so that the sisters would not be harmed.[78] Like Christ, Clare was willing to lay down her life for the lives of her sisters. We find a similar spirit of cruciform love in Clare's desire to go to Morocco "to endure martyrdom for love of the Lord," as the sixth witness at the *Process of Canonization* described.[79]

These events indicate what it meant for Clare to be a member of Christ's Body. She believed that a deep, loving relationship with the God of self-giving love leads one not only to union but to embodying that love in one's own life. Her language of motherhood underscores a deep, penetrating relationship of love with the crucified Spouse. It is a union of love that conceives the Word, carries the Word, gives birth to the Word and then is mirrored in the Word. Because this "motherhood" is none other than the imitation of Christ, it becomes a reality in the life of the believer when the soul can cry out of the Word delivered of her/him: "This is my Body." Clare's spirituality impels us to admit that we become what we conceive within us in the same way that we become what we love. Her spiritual path calls for active love, and only one who has entered into union with the crucified Spouse can become like the Spouse, crucified in love. This highest stage of spiritual love is the life-giving basis of the Church. In Clare's view, the Body of Christ grows when its members are active lovers not passive listeners. Church membership is not an *affiliation* but a *participation* in the life of Christ. Only one who is on the path to God, who contemplates God and is transformed in God, is truly a member of the Church. In such a person the Eucharist, the Body of Christ, is not only central to the life of faith, but the Body of Christ becomes the body of the believer and, in turn, the body of the believer becomes the life of the Church.

Clare's path of spiritual development leads to a renewal of Gospel or evangelical life which means being a "person in relationship" and

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[78] According to the third witness of the Process of Canonization, Clare declared to her sisters "I want to be your hostage so that you do not do anything bad. If they come, place me before them." *CAED, PC* 3.18, p. 159.

[79] *CAED, PC* 6.6, pp. 168–169.

sharing among persons the experience of Christ.[80] Renewal of the Gospel is centered on the Body of Christ and the bodies of all those who follow Christ. In his book *Swimming in the Sun* Albert Haase writes, "We are the body of Christ on earth and everyday, in some way, we are challenged to become the bread that is broken for the hungry of the world."[81] Eucharist is being bread broken and eaten for a hungry world. It is the food that gives the strength to make every stranger beloved. Miroslav Volf writes:

> We would most profoundly misunderstand the Eucharist if we thought of it only as a sacrament of God's embrace of which we are the fortunate beneficiaries. Inscribed in the very heart of God's grace is the rule that we can be its recipients only if we do not resist being made into its agents. What happens to us must be done by us.[82]

To be the Body of Christ is a flesh and blood reality. "Christ has no body now but yours," Teresa of Avila stated, "no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which must look out Christ's compassion on the world."[83] Clare contributes to this idea by indicating that where God dwells in the life of the believer, the Church lives because Christ lives. It is not the law but the Spirit which gives life, and Clare knew that to possess the Spirit is to possess Christ, and to possess Christ is to possess the heart of the world (cf. 3*LAg* 7). There can be no greater joy or riches (cf. 3*LAg*27–28) nor can the Church have any greater power than the living witness of Christ. Christian life is the life of Christ, and when that life is renewed through prayer and a deepening of love in union with God, the Church becomes more fully the Body of Christ. This Body is life for the world and we are invited into this sacred banquet of life.

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[80] Chinnici, "Evangelical and Apostolic Tensions," p. 7.

[81] Albert Haase, *Swimming in the Sun: Discovering the Lord's Prayer with Francis of Assisi and Thomas Merton* (Cincinnati, 1993), p. 144.

[82] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, p. 129.

[83] According to Steven Payne, O.C.D., in a private communication, this prayer is attributed to St. Teresa of Avila although the authentic source of the prayer is unknown.

Conclusion

Clare's desire to be part of the evangelical life project, as Francis of Assisi envisioned it, is evident in her letters to Agnes of Prague. Although Clare lived under the Benedictine *Rule* for most of her religious life, her letters betray a spirituality that clearly differs from the monastic ascent to God. Like Francis, she clung to an evangelical spirituality that formed one according to the Gospel. The Incarnation was central to Clare's spiritual path and she took as her starting point the poverty and humility of God, revealed in the crucified Spouse. She did not advocate self-reflection on the Word of God as the beginning of the path to union with God but encounter with the Word of God incarnate, as revealed in the cross.

Poverty was central to her spirituality because it marked the revelation of God as love and enabled the spiritual person to be open and receptive to God's love. Clare used the language of "gazing" to describe the journey of the poor person to God. The poor person, like Agnes, is one who can gaze upon and embrace the poor Christ. Her four-fold scheme in her *Second Letter* to Agnes (gaze-consider-contemplate-imitate) echoes the four-fold monastic ladder of ascent (reading-meditation-prayer-contemplation) but also differs from it by describing imitation and not contemplation as the goal of the ascent to God.

As Clare's thought unfolds in her letters we see her spiritual journey take shape; from encountering the God of compassionate love in the crucified Christ, to accepting that love within the human heart and becoming a friend and spouse of Christ. The journey, therefore, moves from an outward encounter to inward union. Relationship with God in union with Christ is a deepening of love, and Clare urged Agnes to contemplate this God of love in the mirror of the cross each day. Her profound understanding of the human capacity for God and her directives to Agnes indicate that union with God is possible only when we come to the truth of who we are in God. The crucified Christ reveals to us our strengths and weaknesses, our capacity to be God-like in love, and our capacity to crucify others. Only when we study our faces in the cross, what makes each of us distinctly human persons, are we then on the path to transformation in God.

Clare's very personal approach to God leads to the simple idea: we become what we love. Her mysticism of motherhood summarizes

this idea by indicating that the one who loves God becomes a dwelling place for the Trinity and, like Mary, able to spiritually conceive the life of God within.[84] While gazing on the God of compassionate love leads to the conception of God within, union with God through contemplation and transformation does not remain interior. Rather interior transformation is to show itself on the face of the believer. The person who is transformed in Christ radiates Christ—God becomes enfleshed in the life of the believer. Thus, while Clare's journey begins from outward to inward, the completion of the journey moves from inward to outward. To become one with the One we love is to give birth to Christ in one's life, that is, to imitate or "image" Christ. The Body of the beloved Christ becomes the body of the faith-filled lover. The goal of the journey, therefore, differs from the traditional monastic path in which contemplation and union with God is transcendent and spiritual in nature. Clare's spiritual path, her mysticism of motherhood, characterizes a Gospel-centered spirituality in that one who follows Christ brings Christ to birth in one's life, and in this way, becomes a co-worker with God, a vital member of Christ's Body, the Church.

For a woman who lived outside the marketplace in the solitude of San Damiano, Clare showed remarkable insight with regard to renewal of the Gospel life and the life of the Church. She reminds us that Christian life is living fully in the Body of Christ just as Christ is to live in the heart of the faithful soul. Where Christ is alive in the heart of the believer, the Church is alive in the heart of the world.

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[84] Bonaventure described a similar type of mysticism of motherhood in his "Five Feasts of the Child Jesus." See Bonaventure, "The Five Feasts of the Child Jesus" in *Bonaventure: Mystic of God's Word: Selected Spiritual Writings*, ed. Timothy Johnson (New York, 1999), pp. 139–152.

PRAYER IN THE *LIFE OF SAINT FRANCIS* BY THOMAS OF CELANO

J.A. Wayne Hellmann

Brother Thomas of Celano,[1] upon the request of Pope Gregory IX,[2] shortly after the 1228 canonization of Francis of Assisi, wrote *The Life of St. Francis*.[3] In the opening lines, Thomas describes the beginnings of Francis's conversion. Thomas writes that Francis, secluded in a cave, prayed that "God guide his way."[4] In the closing lines at the end of *The Life*, Thomas accents the public prayer of the church in the person of pope. After the canonization Pope Gregory went to Francis's tomb to pray: "by the lower steps he enters the sanctuary to offer prayers and sacrifices."[5] From beginning to end, throughout the text of *The Life of St. Francis*, the author, Brother Thomas, weaves Francis's life together through an integrative theology of prayer.

To shape his vision of Francis, Thomas, as a hagiographer, moves with multiple theological and literary currents, old and new. At the core of his vision, however, Thomas presents the life of a saint that developed from beginning to end in prayer. To do this, he employs

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[1] Brother Thomas of Celano was born into the noble family of the Conti dei Marsi sometime between the years of 1185–1190. Celano, the place of his birth, is a small city in the Abruzzi region southeast of Aquila. Thomas may have included himself a reference in number 56 of his text that "some literary men and nobles gladly joined" Francis after his return from Spain in 1215. In 1221 Thomas was chosen for the mission to Germany where he was elected custodian of the brothers in Worms, Speyer, and Cologne. He died on October 4, 1260 in Tagliacozzo. His literary works regarding Francis of Assisi are the following: *The Life of St. Francis* (1229), *The Legend for Use in Choir*, (1230), *The Remembrance of the Desire for a Soul* (1247), *The Treatise on the Miracles* (1254). Cf. Engelbert Grau, "Thomas of Celano: Life and Work," trans. Xavier John Seubert, *Greyfriars Review* 8.2 (1994), pp. 177–200.

[2] Pope Gregory IX, Hugolino dei Conti di Segni, was pope from March 19, 1227 until August 22, 1241. Born in 1170, he was the nephew of Innocent III and after completion of his studies in Bologna and Paris he served his uncle, becoming papal legate for Lombardy and Tuscany. In this context, he met both Francis and Clare and eventually became their protector.

[3] This *Life of St. Francis* is also known as the *Vita Prima*.

[4] *1C* 6, *FAED* 1, p. 187; *Fontes*, p. 282.

[5] *1C* 126, *FAED* 1, p.296; *Fontes*, p. 559.

four different movements or sections in his text,[6] and in each of these sections Thomas draws from different sources.[7] Each has a unique focus: conversion, mission, transformation, and glory. In the first narrative Francis is presented so "that of conversion to God he might be an example";[8] and in the second Francis is the preacher. He was so effective that those who heard him preach became "children of peace."[9] Thirdly, Francis approaching his death during the last two years of his life is presented as one who "had just been taken down from the cross."[10] He is transformed into Christ Crucified. Then, finally, in the fourth and last section, Francis is celebrated and canonized by the church on earth as he "stands by the throne of

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[6] *The Life of St. Francis* is usually considered in three sections. This threefold division is based on Thomas's own description of his text: "I have divided everything that I was able to gather together about the blessed man into three books . . . According, the first book follows the historical sequence and is devoted to the purity of his blessed way of life . . . The second book, on the other hand, tells of his deeds from the next to last year of his life up to his happy death. The third book contains the many miracles . . . and glory paid to him by the blessed Pope Gregory . . . when they enrolled him in the catalogue of the saints" *1C* prol, *FAED* 1, p. 180; *Fontes,* pp. 275–276. However, for the purposes of this essay, I have divided book one into two sections as there are two distinct movements within book one, that of conversion (ns. 1–22) and of preaching mission (ns. 23–87). Books two and three respectfully provided the remaining two sections, namely transformation and glory. Thus, this essay is divided into four parts. (The short listing of miracles, numbers 127–147, serves more as an appendix and will not be considered in the parameters of this essay.)

[7] Although not in a totally exclusive manner, each of the four proposed divisions represents in broad strokes different theological traditions. In the conversion narrative, Thomas draws from the rich hagiographical tradition. In the preaching mission narrative, the general spirit and scope of church reform as indicated in the bull of canonization, *Mira Circa Nos* (1228), finds a significant place. Book two, the third section, applies Dionysian, Cistercian, and Victorine mystical/contemplative theology to Francis's final transformation into Christ. Book three, the fourth and final section reflects an eyewitness account and offers the drama of a great liturgy of the universal church on earth and the church in heaven brought together into one chorus of praise. This source criticism merits further examination, but it is beyond the scope of this essay. However, initial forays into such study are the following: J.A. Wayne Hellmann, "The Seraph in Thomas of Celano's *Vita Prima*" in *That Others May Know and Love: Essays in Honor of Zachary Hayes, OFM*, ed. Michael Cusato and Edward Coughlin. (St. Bonaventure, 1997), pp. 23–41; Emanuela Prinzivalli, "A Saint to be Read: Francis of Assisi in the Hagiographic Sources" *Greyfriars Review* 15 (2001), pp. 253–259; William Short, "Francis, the 'New' Saint in the Tradition of Christian Hagiography" in *Francis of Assisi: History, Hagiography and Hermeneutics in the Early Documents*, ed. Jay M. Hammond (Hyde Park, 2004), pp. 153–156.

[8] *1C* 2, *FAED* 1, p. 184; *Fontes*, p. 279.

[9] *1C* 23, *FAED* 1, p. 203; *Fontes*, p. 297.

[10] *1C* 114, *FAED* 1, p. 280; *Fontes*, p. 390.

God"[11] in glory. Each of these four sections or movements within the text of *The Life of St. Francis* reveals four diverse approaches to prayer.

These four approaches to prayer are: 1) prayer and conversion, 2) prayer and mission, 3) prayer and transformation, 4) prayer and the church, that is, the import of his life upon the prayer of the faithful. According to Thomas, Francis's prayer begins in the initial stirrings found in the grace of conversion. Prayer then empowers him and his brothers to be faithful and effective in their mission of preaching. Near the end of his life, prayer transforms him into intimacy with his Beloved, Christ Crucified. Finally and fourthly, after his death, in the description of the canonization, Francis's prayer bursts into the ecclesial prayer of the Church on earth, and even unto the divine liturgy of the Church in heaven. Thus, in these four sections of the text, *The Life of St. Francis*, four different dimensions of prayer in Francis's life are to be examined.

Of the four sections, the first two, which treat conversion (nos. 1–22) and the mission of preaching (nos. 23–87), are found in book one. The third section on transformation is developed in book two (nos. 88–118). Finally, the fourth section, prayer of the church, is celebrated in book three (nos. 119–126).

Prayer and Conversion

In the opening narrative of section one (1–22), Thomas reports Francis was raised "in accordance with the vanity of the age."[12] All were caught in sin and vice, but the Lord visited Francis:

> *The hand of the Lord was upon him, a change of the right hand of the Most High*, that through him the Lord might give sinners confidence in a new life of grace; and that of conversion to God, he might be an example.[13]

The "hand of the Lord" is subsequently explained in the following manner: a "divine anointing came upon him."[14] Conversion begins with a gift of grace. Consequently, Thomas describes conversion as

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[11] *1C* 119, *FAED* 1, p. 288; *Fontes*, p. 398.
[12] *1C* 1, *FAED* 1, p. 182; *Fontes*, p. 277.
[13] *1C* 2, *FAED* 1, p. 184; *Fontes*, p. 279.
[14] *1C* 3, *FAED* 1, p. 184; *Fontes*, p. 279.

"a new life of grace."[15] It is then, through and in the gift of grace, first stirrings of prayer occur within Francis. These stirrings are expressed in new questions and in new wonder: "He began *to mull over within himself* things that were not usual for him."[16] Wonder, awe, and internal questioning provide the springboard for a life of prayer. New movements deep within the soul are initial manifestations of the workings of interior grace. Sensitivity to these movements deep within offer Francis occasion for his first internal silent prayer.

He is moved to enter his "inner most self."[17] He leaves the distracting noises without and enters into the silent voice within. Inward journey opens the door and allows the "new life of grace" to take root within him. It gives him internal space to sense and to ponder new marvels. Only after extended wonder and inner searching does the Lord come to him "in a *vision during the night* in the sweetness of grace."[18] From this interior vision he received on the way to Apula,[19] Francis begins his first step outward. He then becomes anxious "to direct his will to God's . . . he prayed with all his heart that the eternal and true God guide his way and *teach him to do His will.*"[20] Desire for the will of God became his first articulated prayer, the foundation and first intention of all his subsequent prayer. Eventually, when Francis exhales his last breath, his last prayer will express the same initial fervent desire of his first prayer.

Francis's first prayer is answered. The "Lord showed him what he must do,"[21] namely, to seek the kingdom of heaven. This gave Francis new resolve and new desire. He began to seek "with great longing"[22] the "hidden treasure"[23] of the kingdom of heaven.

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[15] *1C* 2, *FAED* 1, p. 184; *Fontes*, p. 279.
[16] *1C* 3, *FAED* 1, pp. 184–185; *Fontes*, p. 279.
[17] *1C* 6, *FAED* 1, p. 187; *Fontes*, p. 282. For this reason Francis would "enter the cave . . . to pray to his Father in secret" (*1C* 6, *FAED* 1, p. 187; *Fontes*, p. 282) and lower "himself into a hiding place" (*1C* 10, *FAED* 1, p. 190; *Fontes*, p. 286).
[18] *1C* 5, *FAED* 1, p. 186; *Fontes*, p. 280.
[19] Cf. *1C* 5, *FAED* 1, p. 186; *Fontes*, p. 280. Apulia is located in the southeastern part of the Italian peninsula. "Eager for glory" Francis was about to set out on a journey to Apulia to fight on behalf of the papal militia when he had his first dream: ". . . his whole house was filled with soldier's arms: saddles, shields, spears and other equipment." Thomas notes that "his spirit was not moved by these things in its usual way." There is a change within him.
[20] *1C* 6, *FAED* 1, p. 187; *Fontes*, p. 282.
[21] *1C* 7, *FAED* 1, p. 188; *Fontes*, p. 283.
[22] *1C* 7, *FAED* 1, p. 188; *Fontes*, p. 283.
[23] *1C* 7, *FAED* 1, p. 188; *Fontes*, p. 283.

Thenceforth, he "desired *to possess wisdom*, which *is better than gold*, and *to acquire understanding*, which *is more precious than silver*."[24] In this development, Thomas identifies wonder in the initial stirrings of prayer; and these interior movements of heart foster new desire. New desire leads Francis to articulate this desire and express it in prayer. According to Thomas, grace plants the seeds of prayer, and prayer increases the grace of prayer, above all in the conversion of desire from the vanity of external riches such as "saddles, shields, and spears"[25] toward longing for the greater interior treasures of "wisdom" and "understanding."[26] New desire for interior treasure, the fruit of his prayer, leads Francis to renounce his exterior worldly inheritance by stripping himself naked before the bishop of Assisi.[27] This symbolic and dramatic action expresses exteriorly the new internal prayer of his heart.[28] "He was burning inwardly with a divine fire, and he was unable to conceal outwardly the flame kindled in his soul."[29]

New desire, however, demands new freedom. For this freedom, Francis then prayed: ". . . he earnestly prayed for the Savior's mercy, and, lacking, confidence in his own efforts, *he cast his care upon the Lord*."[30] In prayer, he gradually became "deaf"[31] to all external jeers and internal fears and thereby free from his father's threats so that "he now enjoyed greater freedom."[32] His initial struggles gradually became "joyful."[33] And so with a "more confident spirit"[34] he was "now free to go anywhere, [and] he moved about with greater heart."[35] In new freedom, Francis discovers deeper relationship to his own "inner self." As a result of this, a new form of prayer, namely the prayer of praise, wells up within him. He began "singing praises to the Lord"[36] and in fact he began "to make the woods resound with praises to the Creator of all."[37] Thus his prayer moves

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[24] *1C* 9, *FAED* 1, p. 190; *Fontes*, p. 285.
[25] *1C* 5, *FAED* 1, p. 186; *Fontes*, p. 281.
[26] *1C* 9, *FAED* 1, p. 190; *Fontes*, p. 285.
[27] Cf. *1C* 15, *FAED* 1; p. 193, *Fontes*, p. 290.
[28] Cf. Thomas Heffernan, *Sacred Biography* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 3–38.
[29] *1C* 6, *FAED* 1, p. 187; *Fontes*, p. 282.
[30] *1C* 10, *FAED* 1, p. 191; *Fontes*, p. 286.
[31] *1C* 11, *FAED* 1, p. 191; *Fontes*, p. 287.
[32] *1C* 13, *FAED* 1, p. 193; *Fontes*, p. 289.
[33] *1C* 13, *FAED* 1, p. 193; *Fontes*, p. 289.
[34] *1C* 13, *FAED* 1, p. 193; *Fontes*, p. 289.
[35] *1C* 13, *FAED* 1, p. 193; *Fontes*, p. 289.
[36] *1C* 16, *FAED* 1, p. 194; *Fontes*, p. 291.
[37] *1C* 16, *FAED* 1, p. 194; *Fontes*, p. 291. It is important to note not only that

from initial openness to wonder and awe, forward toward the cultivation of new desire for the will of God and possession of the freedom that accompanies it. The result is a heart filled with praise. Praise moves the heart beyond the narrow self to the marvels of creation and finally to praise of the Creator.

Thomas explicitly describes Francis's praise of God as praise of the "Creator of all."[38] And so not only does Francis's song "make the woods resound with praise,"[39] but within this praise he begins "to extend a hand of mercy to those who had nothing and he poured out compassion for the afflicted."[40] His new relationship of praise toward the "Creator of all," brings him, even from the earliest stirrings of prayer, into a new relationship with *all* that the Creator has made: with the woods that he fills with praise and with new compassion for those who had nothing, especially lepers.[41] Why is this? In praising God, heart and mind are liberated from the narrow and superficial self. Heart and mind become empowered from the "innermost self": ". . . he started thinking of holy and useful matters with the grace and *strength of the Most High*."[42]

In the opening narrative of Francis's conversion, Thomas expresses the initial development of his theology of prayer. Prayer is gift. It begins with generosity from the hand of the Lord who anointed him. This gift moves him forward in wonder toward desire for new freedom in the will of God. This freedom is also freedom for prayer in

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Francis's first prayer is a prayer of praise to the Creator, but also that this praise of the Creator is explicitly the "Creator of all." Thus, in his first prayer of praise, Francis makes the "woods resound with praise." The reader will note that at the end of Book one in the Greccio story of praise, the "boulders echo" praise (*1C* 85, *FAED* 1, p. 255; *Fontes* 361) and in the final praise of Book three regarding Francis's canonization, "the earth echoes the booming sound" (*1C* 126, *FAED* 1, p. 296; *Fontes*, p. 405). Praise of the "Creator of all" is cosmic praise, especially as it subsequently moves into the context of liturgical praise.

[38] *1C* 16, *FAED* 1, p. 194; *Fontes*, p. 291.

[39] *1C* 16, *FAED* 1, p. 194; *Fontes*, p. 291.

[40] *1C* 17, *FAED* 1, p. 195; *Fontes*, p. 292.

[41] It should be noted that the first description of Francis kissing a leper is presented in the context of demonstrating the movement of his prayer from praise to compassion. Thomas utilizes the leper story to manifest the prayer of praise that opens his heart to compassion: "When he started thinking of holy and useful matters with the grace and *strength of the Most High*, while still in the clothes of the world, he met a leper one day. Made stronger than himself, he came up *and kissed him*. . . . He extended a hand of mercy to those who had nothing and he poured out compassion for the afflicted." *1C* 17, *FAED* 1, p. 195; *Fontes*, p. 292.

[42] *1C* 17, *FAED* 1, p. 195; *Fontes*, p. 292.

which he simply praises the "Creator of all." Praise opens his heart even more to the mystery of God and contains within it the seeds for new relationship with all God has created. The "new life of grace" at the beginning of Francis's conversion is first manifested interiorly in longing for the will of God and exteriorly in "loud voice" of praise. When wonder opens the heart, it becomes filled with praise. Wonder is the first teacher of prayer. Praise follows as its first song.

The prayer of praise that opens the door to an ever-greater freedom is what moves Francis to build a "house of God." Thomas describes this in the following manner:

> The first work that blessed Francis undertook,
> after he had gained his freedom,
> from the hands of his carnally-minded father,
> was to build a house of God.
> He did not try to build a new one,
> but he prepared an old one,
> restored an ancient one.[43]

This term, house of God, is used to symbolize the church. The church is an ancient structure built on praise of God and on compassion for those who have nothing. Hearts that are free for praise of God and for compassion toward neighbor are prayerful hearts. In this Thomas presents Francis's prayer as a building stone for the house of God. To praise God and enter his house is the move that cultivates the fertility of heart necessary to conceive and bring to birth the Word of God. Only after development in the prayer of praise and growth in compassion, and after rebuilding the church of San Damiano, does Francis hear the Gospel in the church of St. Mary of the Angels:[44] "about how the Lord sent out his disciples to

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[43] *1C* 18, *FAED* 1, p. 196; *Fontes*, p. 293. The house of God in this case initially refers to the Church of San Damiano, an abandoned church near Assisi, which he rebuilt. Subsequently it refers to the Church of St. Mary of the Angels where he later took residence. In building a "house of God," Thomas notes that Francis "repaired an old one, restored an ancient one." He brings new life of prayer and praise into the ancient structure. He moves from the praise that makes "the woods resound with praise" into a church where he truly first *hears* the Gospel. His desire for the word of God and his action upon that word eventually prove to be the foundation for his restoration of the church, understood in a more universal sense.

[44] The small church in the forest below Assisi dates from the 10th century. During the time of Francis, the church was dependent on the Benedictine abbey of Mt. Subasio.

preach."[45] In this church dedicated to the Mother of God, the words of the Gospel increase and shape his holy desire even more: "This is what I want," he responds, "this is what I seek, this is what I desire with all my heart."[46]

In the house of God where the Gospel is proclaimed, Francis finds the "hidden treasure," the "wisdom" and "understanding" he had initially sought. This is explained when Thomas writes Francis came "to understand better the words of the Gospel."[47] Earlier, Francis had prayed "with all his heart" that God "would teach him to do his will." Now, Francis discovers God's will. It is in the Gospel. It is no surprise then that he desires the Gospel with "all his (my) heart." In and through his prayer, the will of God is made real and concrete for him in the Gospel. From this point forward, initial yearning for the will of God and embrace of the Gospel merge together into one captivating desire. The prayer that opened his heart for praise of God and compassion for neighbor now leads him into that place, the house of God, where he hears and discovers the deepest desire of his "innermost self," that is, the "wisdom" and "understanding" found in the word of God, more specifically, in the Gospel:

> As for the other things he heard, he set about doing with great care and reverence. For he was no deaf hearer of the gospel; rather he committed everything he heard to his excellent memory and was careful to carry it out to the letter.[48]

Prayer cultivates deep relationship with desire deep within the "inmost self." This is freedom, as indicated, a freedom for praise and compassion. This is the same prayer that prepares the heart to "hear" the word of God. Thomas makes an important point that the opening up of the heart in praise and compassion is foundation and pre-condition for actually "hearing" the Word of God. It is this that allows Francis to commit "everything he heard to his excellent memory."

Prayer of conversion moves forward in desire for the word of God. Thus, Francis's prayer does not begin in the house of God. It begins rather in the depths of the "inner most self." Prayer then leads him

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[45] *1C* 22, *FAED* 1, p. 201; *Fontes*, p. 296.
[46] *1C* 22, *FAED* 1, pp. 201–202; *Fontes*, p. 297.
[47] *1C* 22, *FAED* 1, p. 201; *Fontes*, p. 296.
[48] *1C* 22, *FAED* 1, p. 202; *Fontes*, p. 297.

outward in new freedom beyond the self and ultimately into the house of God where praise and compassion meet. In the church where the Gospel is proclaimed Francis embraces with "all his heart" the mystery of God (praise) made flesh (compassion). Prayer leads him into the house of God where the gospel takes root as the deepest desire of his heart.

In this first section on the prayer of conversion, Thomas integrates disparate elements of the conversion stories of earlier saints by weaving them together in a development of the theology of prayer.[49] In this way, the reader is invited to participate in Francis's own conversion by learning from Francis's example the early stages of prayer. Whatever the circumstances of any conversion, prayer is what moves the heart forward and capitalizes on the initial stirrings of the "new life of grace." Praise and compassion are the two primary and fundamental expressions of prayer. It is these that lead actually to "hearing" the gospel. Prayer of conversion moves the heart to gospel word, and it is primarily in this dynamic of prayer Thomas sets out to offer his reader a new saint who is "an example of conversion."[50]

Prayer and Mission

Once Francis is no longer a "deaf hearer of the gospel,"[51] Thomas immediately moves forward toward a description of his mission of "to carry it (Gospel) out to the letter."[52] The converted Francis becomes the preacher Francis. The second narrative found in book one (23–87) opens in a simple and straight forward manner:

> He then began to preach penance to all with a fervent spirit and joyful attitude. He inspired his listeners with words that were simple and a heart that was heroic. His word was like a *blazing fire*, reaching the deepest parts of the heart, and filling the souls of all with wonder.[53]

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[49] Like Augustine, Francis had roamed the "streets of Babylon," and like Benedict he found a "narrow cave" for prayer. As the martyrs before him he entered the struggle "to possess wisdom," that is, he had to wrestle "naked with the naked." His growth in compassion led him to kiss a leper as St. Martin had done. Finally, like Antony of Egypt, he also heard the gospel in a church and renounced his possessions. Cf. Footnotes to *1C* 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22 in *FAED* 1.

[50] Cf. *1C* 2, *FAED* 1, p. 184; *Fontes*, p. 279.

[51] *1C* 22, *FAED* 1, p. 202; *Fontes*, p. 297.

[52] *1C* 22, *FAED* 1, p. 202; *Fontes*, p. 297.

[53] *1C* 23, *FAED* 1, p. 202; *Fontes*, p. 297.

In the mission of preaching, prayer takes new form. The prayer that opened his heart to the word of God now flows out of word of God into his preaching. It serves preaching: "In all of his preaching, before he presented the word of God to the assembly, he prayed for peace saying: "*May the Lord give you peace.*"[54] Thomas emphasizes this point. He goes on to explain that Francis "always proclaimed this to men and women, to those he met and to those who met him."[55] He identifies a Francis who understood that the heart of the Gospel message is a message of peace. So the scriptural passage, "*May the Lord give you peace*" (2 Thes 3:16) became the refrain of his prayer and identified the scope of his preaching. He prayed for his listeners. He prayed that his preaching might open the hearts of his listeners so they would "become children of peace"[56] and enjoy the gift of peace that comes from "the consolation and the grace of the Holy Spirit."[57]

There is yet another classical prayer text that Thomas cites as integral to Francis's mission of preaching. As Francis moved about in his preaching journey he would often find "a place of prayer:"[58]

> He remained there a long time with *fear and trembling* before *the Ruler of the whole earth.* He recalled *in the bitterness of* his *soul the years* he had spent badly, frequently repeating this phrase: *Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.* Gradually, an indescribable joy and tremendous sweetness began to well up deep in his heart.[59]

As Francis preaches and begins to form his new companions, his sense of unworthiness ever increases. His own sins make him unequal to the task of his mission. He seeks refuge in praying as a 'mantra' the ancient prayer of the monks of the Egyptian desert: "*Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.*"[60] The above scriptural prayer, *May the Lord give you peace*, was his prayer in the public forum of his preaching.

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[54] *1C* 23, *FAED* 1, p. 203; *Fontes*, p. 298.
[55] *1C* 23, *FAED* 1, p. 203; *Fontes*, p. 298.
[56] *1C* 22, *FAED* 1, p. 203; *Fontes*, p. 298.
[57] *1C* 26, *FAED* 1, p. 205; *Fontes*, p. 300.
[58] *1C* 26, *FAED* 1, p. 205; *Fontes*, p. 300.
[59] *1C* 26, *FAED* 1, p. 200; *Fontes*, p. 300.
[60] This prayer is often known as the "Jesus Prayer" or the "Prayer of the Heart." For introduction to the spirituality, origin, and practice of this prayer, see Helen Bacovcin, *The Way of a Pilgrim and the Pilgrim Continues His Way* (New York, 1992); Alphonse and Rachel Goettmann, *Prayer of Jesus, prayer of the heart*, trans. Theodore and Rebecca Nottingham (New York, 1991).

This second prayer was repeated frequently in the privacy of his soul to sustain him on his mission. In this prayer, "an indescribable joy and tremendous sweetness began to well up deep in his heart." Francis would find his own inner peace. He became certain that his sins were forgiven. Thomas describes that this ancient prayer of the desert gave him "assurance of being revived in grace." In this prayer Francis would find "his inmost soul opened wide."[61] Thus, this prayer of the desert brought him not only to "his inmost self" as in the beginning of his conversion, but it also opened him into a public transparency. It enabled him in his frequent practice that "when he did something wrong he was not ashamed to confess it in his preaching before all the people."[62]

In the continuing narrative of his Gospel mission, Thomas shows how Francis's prayer takes new shape. It becomes more rooted in the word of God, more focused on the word of God. It was a prayer that helped him stay the course on his mission to preach the Gospel. As later he sent his brothers out to preach, he taught them from his own experience: "Be patient in trials, confident the Lord will fulfill his plan and promise."[63] He assured them of the freedom he had discovered in prayer: "*Cast your care upon the Lord, and he will sustain you.*"[64] They, too, must set out "strengthened with the armor of great confidence,"[65] but for this gift of perseverance, they, too must pray.

When Francis takes the road with his new brothers, Thomas writes that Francis first "went to the tomb of St. Peter."[66] He connects Francis's preaching mission with mission of the apostles, just as he had earlier heard in the gospel. His life was to be a preaching pilgrimage. So beginning with prayer at the tomb of St. Peter, he then set out from Rome with his brothers to "a deserted place"[67] to seek again God's will, and to experience with them the delight "of divine

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[61] *1C* 26, *FAED* 1, p. 205; *Fontes*, p. 301.
[62] *1C* 54, *FAED* 1, p. 228; *Fontes*, p. 328.
[63] *1C* 29, *FAED* 1, p. 207; *Fontes*, p. 303.
[64] *1C* 29, *FAED* 1, p. 207; *Fontes*, p. 303. See footnote n. 20 above and *1C* 10, *FAED* 1, p. 191; *Fontes*, p. 286.
[65] *1C* 11, *FAED* 1, p. 191; *Fontes*, p. 287.
[66] *1C* 34, *FAED* 1, p. 213; *Fontes*, p. 308.
[67] *1C* 34, *FAED* 1, p. 214; *Fontes*, p. 309. As Francis's prayer began in a "cave" or a "hiding place," solitary places continue to punctuate the development of his prayer throughout his life, even to the final emphasis on the "hermitage" near the end of his life will be seen in Book two.

consolation . . . having put aside all *their cares* about earthly things."[68] In this time apart, Francis teaches them the importance of time and space for "holy *prayer before coming* to any decision."[69] The brothers, however, then begged him to teach them more about prayer:

> Francis told them: *When you pray, say 'Our Father'* and "We adore you, O Christ, in all your churches throughout the world, and we bless you, for by your holy cross you have redeemed the world."[70]

In teaching the brothers to pray, Francis follows the example of Jesus in the Gospel. He first teaches them to pray as Jesus taught his disciples to pray. The *Our Father* is a Gospel prayer. In the same breath, however, he also teaches them an ancient liturgical antiphon from the feast of the Exultation of the Holy Cross. This prayer focuses them on prayer within the house of God, that is, "in all churches thorough the world." He connects the biblical prayer of the 'Our Father' with liturgical prayer.

Where Francis first heard the word of God, that is, in a church where the Gospel is proclaimed, is where he likewise instructs his followers to pray. With the introduction of this ancient liturgical antiphon, Francis's prayer becomes explicitly Christological for the first time: "We adore you O Christ, in all your churches throughout the world . . ." Christ is present in all churches throughout the world because of his cross, by which he "redeemed the world." Based on the earlier practice of the recitation of this prayer when one entered a church and approached the cross hanging inside, Francis connects Gospel preaching of the brothers to the redemptive mission of Christ on the cross.

Thomas emphasizes even further this antiphonal prayer. Later in the narrative, he reveals that when the brothers sighted a church they did the following:

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[68] *1C* 35, *FAED* 1, p. 214; *Fontes*, p. 309.

[69] *1C* 35, *FAED* 1, p. 214; *Fontes*, p. 309.

[70] *1C* 45, *FAED* 1, p. 222; *Fontes*, p. 319. This text was an antiphon used in Matins for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. It is found in the liturgical texts of the *Liber Responsalis* of Gregory the Great. In his *Documenta Vitae Religiosae*, the monk Arnulphe encourages this prayer to be prayed when one enters a church and approaches its cross. Cf. Gregory the Great, *Liber Responsalis* (*PL* 78, 804) and Arnulphe de Boeriis, *Documenta Vitae Religiosae* (*PL* 184, 1177). No wonder later texts written on Francis during this period actually have Francis approach a cross after he enters the church of San Damiano.

> . . . prostrate on the ground, bowing inwardly and outwardly, they would adore the Almighty saying, 'We adore you . . .', just as their holy father had taught them. What is just as striking is that whenever they saw a cross or the sign of the cross, whether on the ground, on a wall, in the trees or roadside hedges they did the same thing.[71]

This is significant in the development of Thomas's theology of prayer. As prayer becomes more explicitly focused on the mission of preaching the word of God, prayer enters more deliberately into liturgical and ecclesial context. Prayer takes on new dynamic to "adore" Christ. The redemptive significance of the cross emerges. In this, the images of church and cross are brought together. As the brothers moved about the countryside to preach, the sighting of either was an immediate invitation to prayer. It was a simple prayer for the road, and it kept their preaching connected to the church with their eyes focused on the cross.

At this point, well past the prayer of his conversion, one might note that Francis's prayer takes on a liturgical, christological and soteriological aspect. His earlier prayer of conversion contained reference neither to church nor to Christ. His earlier prayer rather led him into the church and from there to Christ. In Thomas's understanding, conversion leads to the word of God and then to the mission of preaching that word. Therein, first formed and focused on the word of God, the brothers are brought to work within the house of God, into the heart and life of the church. The will of God realized in the mission of preaching presses them forward toward the redemptive cross of Christ. It is not without significance that Thomas presents a Francis who utilizes this ancient liturgical antiphon to teach Christological prayer and the redemptive significance of the cross. The prayer he taught his brothers directs them back into the same liturgical space where during "the solemnities of the Mass"[72] at the church of St. Mary of the Angels he had first heard the Gospel.

Book two then continues with many anecdotal stories about the preaching of Francis and of the brothers. The final preaching story in book one, however, is found in the Greccio Christmas liturgy.[73]

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[71] *1C* 45, *FAED* 1, p. 222; *Fontes*, p. 320.
[72] *1C* 22, *FAED* 1, p. 201; *Fontes*, p. 296.
[73] "We should note as a matter worthy of memory and something to be recalled with reverence, what he did, three years prior to his death at the town of Greccio,

It completes book one and is a fitting conclusion to the two sections on conversion and mission. In the description of this solemn Christmas liturgy, Thomas writes a conclusion that explicates the overall significance of book one. He captures both the prayer of conversion and the prayer of mission. Only at the end of this first book, after describing most of the years of Francis's life, does he bring into explicit focus Francis's intimate relationship with Christ. In regard to the prayer of conversion, Francis's initial desire was to know and follow the will of God. This desire moved him to respond to the Gospel "with all his heart," but now his desire becomes even more specific and concrete. It becomes explicitly Christological: "to follow the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ and to retrace his steps completely,"[74] with "all desire of soul."[75]

In the prayer of Greccio, desire for will of God becomes desire for "teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ." Francis's search for the "hidden treasure" is found. He began "to recall with regular meditation the words of Christ and recollect His deeds with most attentive perception."[76] In Greccio, he praises anew "the Creator of all." Not only do the "woods respond with praise" as earlier but now "the boulders echo back the joyful crowd."[77] There is cosmic song in the night. He has new vision different than the earlier night vision of instruments of power (saddles, shields and spears) on the way to Apulia.[78] At Greccio, awakened from a deep sleep, the vision is now "a child lying lifeless in the manger".[79]

Greccio presents Francis in his Gospel mission not only as wondering preaching through the towns and villages but now as a Levite during the "solemnities of the Mass" adorned with vestments. "He sings the holy gospel;" he tastes "the word on his happy palate;" and he savors "the sweetness of the word."[80] With the praise of a joyful crowd and echoing boulders, he now sings, tastes and even-

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on the birthday of our Lord Jesus Christ . . ." Cf. *1C* 84–87, *FAED* 1, pp. 254–257; *Fontes*, pp. 359–363.

[74] *1C* 84, *FAED* 1, p. 254; *Fontes*, p. 359.
[75] *1C* 84, *FAED* 1, p. 254; *Fontes*, p. 359.
[76] *1C* 84, *FAED* 1, p. 254; *Fontes*, p. 359.
[77] *1C* 85, *FAED* 1, p. 255; *Fontes*, p. 361.
[78] Cf. *1C* 5, *FAED* 1, p. 186; *Fontes*, p. 281.
[79] *1C* 86, *FAED* 1, p. 256; *Fontes*, p. 361.
[80] *1C* 86, *FAED* 1, p. 256; *Fontes*, p. 361.

tually sees the word he had earlier heard and strenuously preached throughout the mission of his life:

> Here is his voice: a powerful voice, *a pleasant voice*, a clear voice, a musical voice, inviting all to the highest of gifts. Then he preaches to the people standing around him and pours forth sweet honey about the birth of the poor King and the poor city of Bethlehem. Moreover, burning with excessive love, he often calls Christ the 'babe from Bethlehem' whenever he means to call him Jesus.[81]

In presenting this understanding of Francis's preaching, Thomas unfolds an intense, but consistent, development in experience of prayer, from the initial stirrings of grace that move within the "inner self" into a rich cosmic liturgical celebration. Greccio describes the final scope and goal of his preaching. The word he preaches is the Incarnate Word, the "little child lying lifeless in the manger" whom Francis wakened "from a deep sleep."[82] Just as he had committed the word of the Gospel he heard at St. Mary of the Angels to "his excellent memory"[83] so now through his preaching to the multitudes "the child Jesus . . . given over to oblivion now is awakened and impressed on their loving memory."[84]

Then, in the final lines after the Greccio narrative, almost as an epilogue, Brother Thomas makes two important concluding points. He writes:

> At last, the site of the manger was consecrated as a temple to the Lord. In honor of the most Blessed Francis, an altar was consecrated over the manger, and a church was dedicated.[85]

The image of the "temple to the Lord" recalls Thomas' earlier use of the "house of God." In the new grace of freedom Francis had enjoyed, his "first work . . . was to build a house of God."[86] Thomas himself explains that this first work was the task of repairing the church of San Damiano, where he had earlier scorned his wealth as dust for the sake of his new desire "to possess wisdom."[87] The

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[81] *1C FAED* 1, p. 256; *Fontes*, p. 361.
[82] *1C* 86, *FAED* 1, p. 256; *Fontes*, p. 361.
[83] *1C* 22, *FAED* 1, p. 202; *Fontes*, p. 297.
[84] *1C* 86, *FAED* 1, p. 256; *Fontes*, p. 362.
[85] *1C* 87, *FAED* 1, p. 257; *Fontes*, p. 362.
[86] *1C* 18, *FAED* 1, p. 196; *Fontes*, p. 293.
[87] *1C* 9, *FAED* 1, p. 190; *Fontes*, p. 285.

same grace of conversion worked within him when he later set about to repair another "house of God," the church of the Blessed Virgin, the Portiuncula, where he heard and felt the power of the Gospel message that sent him forth on his mission of preaching: "This is what I desire with all my heart."[88]

Now, however, at Greccio, as a result of his solemn preaching on that Christmas night, a temple is consecrated, that is, an altar is consecrated and a "church is dedicated". The mission of Francis's preaching comes full circle from hearing the Gospel that sent him forth preaching in the public squares to bringing him back into the house of God again to proclaim that same Gospel. Both events, his initial hearing and his final preaching occur during Mass. Through Francis's preaching event in the Greccio story, the manger that nestled a child awakened from a deep sleep becomes a consecrated altar in the new church built at that site. The prayer that sustained Francis and his brothers on their mission, "We adore you O Christ . . ." brings them to the building of a new church with a consecrated altar so that the house of God is now more solemnly identified as a "temple to the Lord." The prayer of conversion and of mission ultimately leads to worship at the altar.

In the very last lines, Thomas makes his one and only explicit reference to reception of the Eucharist: ". . . there humans henceforth for healing of body and soul would eat the flesh of the immaculate and spotless lamb, Our Lord Jesus Christ, who *gave himself for us*."[89] The Christological antiphon adoring Christ, who with his cross "redeemed the world," takes on a deeper reality in the sacrifice of the "spotless lamb *who gave himself for us*." The mission of preaching leads to the altar of the lamb.

The Greccio story at the end of book one brings together many of the elements of prayer of conversion and of mission. It is Francis's sense of awe and wonder that leads him to Greccio. He wanted "to see as much as possible with (my) bodily eyes the discomfort of his infant needs."[90] His desire for wisdom leads him to the Gospel out of which he could then "recall with regular meditation the words of Christ." His mission of preaching the gift of peace is realized in full

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[88] *1C* 22, *FAED* 1, pp. 201–202; *Fontes*, p. 297.
[89] *1C* 87, *FAED* 1, p. 257; *Fontes*, p. 362.
[90] *1C* 84, *FAED* 1, p. 255; *Fontes*, p. 360.

liturgical adornment of the vestments of a Levite as he sang the Gospel "with a powerful voice, a pleasant voice, a clear voice, a musical voice, inviting all to the highest of gifts."[91] Earlier, Francis went about "singing praises to the Lord in French in a certain forest," but it is in the forest at Greccio he truly becomes "the herald *of the great king*."[92] From his preaching, new vision and a new joy follow the singing of the Gospel as the word made flesh, the child Jesus, "is awakened and impressed on (their) loving memory."[93]

All developments in prayer, from initial conversion to fulfillment in mission, lead to the central mystery of the Christian faith found in the "humility of the Incarnation."[94] The word made flesh, the "new mystery of new joy"[95] is "awakened and impressed on loving memory," of the "innermost self" of all who heard him that Christmas night of 1223. Then, Thomas makes his final move into the last lines of book one, that is, into the sacred space of the "temple of the Lord"[96] where at an altar all might "eat the flesh of the immaculate and spotless lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself up for us."[97] Conversion and the mission of preaching lead to partaking at the altar of the lamb. This is the lamb "who gave Himself up for us" on the cross that "redeemed the world."

Prayer and Transformation

In the beginning of book two, Thomas identifies the context for further development of his theology of prayer. This second book, that is, the third section of text to be identified in this essay, also begins

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[91] *1C* 86, *FAED* 1, p. 256; *Fontes*, p. 361.

[92] *1C* 16, *FAED* 1, p. 194; *Fontes*, p. 291. Thomas refers to Francis singing only twice, in the forest after he renounced his inheritance where he sang "praises to the Lord" as "herald of the Great King" (*1C* 16, *FAED* 1, p. 195; *Fontes*, p. 291) and again at Greccio (*1C* 86, *FAED* 1, 256; *Fontes*, p. 361) where he "with full voice sings the holy gospel" as "a Levite."

[93] *1C* 86, *FAED* 1, p. 256; *Fontes*, p. 362. When Francis first heard the Gospel, "he committed everything he heard to his excellent memory" (*1C* 22, *FAED* 1, p. 202; *Fontes*, p. 297). Enfleshment of the word in memory is how the word of God takes flesh among us. Again, preaching the word leads to experience of the mystery of the Incarnation.

[94] *1C* 84, *FAED* 1, p. 254; *Fontes*, p. 359.

[95] *1C* 85, *FAED* 1, p. 255; *Fontes*, p. 361.

[96] *1C* 87, *FAED* 1, p. 257; *Fontes*, p. 362.

[97] *1C* 87, *FAED* 1, p. 257; *Fontes*, p. 362.

with desire for conversion, albeit the deeper conversion of an advanced seeker of the Lord: ". . . he set out on the way of full perfection, reached out for the peak of perfect holiness, and saw the *goal of all perfection*."[98] To attain this goal Francis sought out the "solitude of contemplation"[99] and "through unceasing prayer and frequent contemplation, he reached intimacy with God in an indescribable way."[100] Within the narrative of the last two years of his life, Thomas identifies primary elements for perfection in the life of prayer. Surprisingly, this involves elements similar to the beginnings of prayer:

> He . . . longed to know in what manner, in what way, and with what desire he would be able to cling more perfectly to the Lord God, according to His *counsel* and the *good pleasure* of His will . . . . this was the highest desire that always burned in him as long as he lived.[101]

Here again the more advanced prayer toward intimacy with God begins with desire! Now it is desire not simply to "direct his will to God's,"[102] nor "to follow the teaching of Our Lord Jesus Christ,"[103] but rather to "cling more perfectly"[104] to the "good pleasure of his will"[105] so that "*the will of the heavenly Father* might be *fulfilled* mercifully in him."[106] Even in the advanced stages, desire for the will of God remains his basic prayer. At this latter stage, however, it is no longer a prayer to lead him into his "innermost self" as earlier, but rather now it is a prayer of ascent. Francis is desirous of "passing out of himself"[107] to that place "he had already partially gone."[108]

So where does advanced prayer toward transformation begin? It begins at the altar where "the flesh of the immaculate and spotless lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself up for us" is eaten.

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[98] *1C* 90, *FAED* 1, p. 260; *Fontes*, p. 366.
[99] *1C* 91, *FAED* 1, p. 261; *Fontes*, p. 367. In Book two emphasis on places apart increase. However, Thomas now refers to these in the context of solitude, contemplation, and hermitages. This has different purpose than his initial conversion withdrawal from the "business of the world." Cf. *1C* 6, *FAED* 1, p. 187; *Fontes*, p. 282.
[100] *1C* 91, *FAED* 1, p. 261; *Fontes*, p. 367.
[101] *1C* 91, *FAED* 1, p. 261; *Fontes*, p. 367.
[102] *1C* 6, *FAED* 1, p. 187; *Fontes*, p. 281.
[103] *1C* 84, *FAED* 1, p. 254; *Fontes*, p. 359.
[104] *1C* 91, *FAED* 1, p. 261; *Fontes*, p. 367.
[105] *1C* 91, *FAED* 1, p. 261; *Fontes*, p. 367.
[106] *1C* 92, *FAED* 1, p. 262; *Fontes*, p. 368.
[107] *1C* 92, *FAED* 1, p. 262; *Fontes*, p. 368.
[108] *1C* 92, *FAED* 1, p. 262; *Fontes*, p. 368.

Thus, at the place where the Eucharist celebrates the humility of the Incarnation, Francis moves to an even deeper hearing of the word of God:

> So one day he approached the sacred altar which had been built in the hermitage where he was staying and, taking up the volume where the holy Gospels were written, he placed it reverently upon the altar.[109]

It is hardly accidental that Thomas ends the Gospel preaching mission of Book one at the altar of the Eucharist and then begins book two by placing the book of the Gospels on the altar. In the former instance, conversion leads to the word of God and ultimately to the word made flesh, more specifically "the flesh of the immaculate and spotless lamb" on the altar. In the latter instance, it is from there, by placing the book of the Gospels on an altar, that he again seeks the word of God in order to know how to "cling more perfectly" to the will of his Father. Only in these two instances, at the end of book one and at the beginning of book two does Thomas refer to an altar. In the hermitage at an altar of the lamb, "who gave Himself up for us," Francis did the following:

> . . . he prepared himself with the sign of the cross.[110] He took the book from the altar. . . . The first passage that met his eye was the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ that tells of the suffering he was to endure." . . . He opened the book a second and a third time. Every time he found either the same text or one that was similar.[111]

He saw clearly that his desire to cling to the will of his Father called him "to *enter into the kingdom of God through many trials*, difficulties and struggles."[112] This time his prayer drew him not so much to go out into the world to preach the Gospel message of peace, but rather to enter into the depth of the mystery of the Gospel, into "the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ."[113] The passion of Christ is now his mission. His work is no longer "to build a house of God."[114] He is

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[109] *1C* 92, *FAED* 1, p. 262; *Fontes*, p. 368.

[110] *1C* 93, *FAED* 1, p. 262; *Fontes*, p. 368. As at the very beginning when Francis "fortified himself with the sign of the holy cross" (*1C* 8, *FAED* 1, p. 188; *Fontes*, p. 284), he continues to punctuate his prayer at key moments with the sign of the cross.

[111] *1C* 93, *FAED* 1, p. 262; *Fontes*, pp. 368–369.

[112] *1C* 93, *FAED* 1, p. 263; *Fontes*, p. 369.

[113] *1C* 93, *FAED* 1, p. 262; *Fontes*, p. 368.

[114] *1C* 18, *FAED* 1, p. 196; *Fontes*, p. 293.

rather now to enter into the inner sanctuary of "house of God" and become one with the lamb on the altar of sacrifice. Initially, hearing and preaching the Gospel led him to Greccio, to the altar of mystery of the incarnation of the lamb. Now the Gospel heard at the altar of the lamb invites him to be sacrificed with the lamb on that same altar. At this point Francis's prayer takes a deep plunge into the mystery of "the solemnities of the Mass" celebrated at Greccio and this moves him into the passion of the cross. Now, there is new insight into the initial liturgical prayer Francis had earlier taught his brothers: "We adore you, O Christ, in all your churches throughout the whole world, and we bless you, for by your holy cross you have redeemed the world."

Just as at the end of book one, after Francis sings the Gospel, there is a vision of "a little child," so also at the beginning of book two, after praying and laying the Gospel on the altar, there is a vision: ". . . he saw in *the vision of God* a man, *having six wings like a Seraph, standing over* him, *arms extended and feet joined*, affixed to a cross."[115] What follows is Thomas's employment of Ezekiel's rich biblical image of the Seraph to frame the vision of a man "affixed to a cross." This vision following the Gospel passages discovered at the altar of sacrifice is no longer a vision of "a child lying lifeless in the manger" but rather of "a man . . . affixed to a cross." Both visions affirm the two different Gospel insights at the heart of Francis's prayer and mission. The first confirms his initial mission of preaching the Gospel that the mystery of the Incarnation might be awakened in the hearts of the faithful. The second confirms the later Gospel mission to embrace the passion of the Lamb and ultimately become that man "affixed to the cross." This leads Francis forward to his final Passover prayer that he "pass over entirely to that place where, in passing out of himself, he had already partially gone." What was Francis's response? Ever again and again, it is wonder and awe: ". . . joy and sorrow took their turns in his heart . . . he kept thinking about what this vision could mean."[116]

With this second vision, "signs of the nails begin to appear on his hands and feet."[117] Also, "his body began to be afflicted with different

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[115] *1C* 94, *FAED* 1, p. 263; *Fontes*, p. 370.
[116] *1C* 94, *FAED* 1, p. 264; *Fontes*, p. 370.
[117] *1C* 94, *FAED* 1, p. 264; *Fontes*, p. 370.

kinds of illnesses . . . as he made of his whole body a tongue."[118] Now the Gospel message is not so much proclaimed in his spoken word as in his very flesh. His suffering flesh announces the Word of God. Earlier the word of God announced the flesh of the word in the Incarnation. Now, Francis's flesh itself is the message. The Gospel mystery now proclaimed is the passion of Christ. Francis thus prays that he might embrace the "human condition" accepting "day by day the body must *decay* though *the inner being is being renewed*."[119] Although, he continually longed "to benefit his neighbors,"[120] he now even more "*desired* to be set free and *to be with Christ*."[121]

Thomas continues the opening narrative of book two that "for nearly two years he endured these things, with complete patience and humility, *in all things giving thanks to God*."[122] Even as Francis entrusted himself to the care of certain brothers, he desired to "more freely explore in frequent ecstasy of Spirit the blessed dwelling places of heaven, and in the abundance of grace, stand *in heavenly places* before the gentle and serene *Lord of all things*."[123] His prayer becomes ever more focused on his own passover to the Lord. Yet, there remains a consistency to his prayer. Even as he lost all bodily strength and could no longer move, Francis still had but one wish: "I desire to be found always and completely in harmony with and obedient to God's will alone in everything."[124]

His longing for freedom became radical. He now wanted to be "free from the flesh"[125] and "to pass over to the *kingdom of heaven*."[126] For this reason he asked to be carried back to the church of St. Mary of the Portiuncula, where he had first heard the Gospel and where he first discovered the desire of his heart. "For he wanted to give back his soul to God in that place, where as noted above, he first came to know perfectly the *way of truth*."[127] Upon arriving there and nearing death, he prayed in a manner that is not surprising.

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[118] *1C* 97, *FAED* 1, p. 266; *Fontes*, p. 373.
[119] *1C* 98, *FAED* 1, p. 266; *Fontes*, p. 374.
[120] *1C* 98, *FAED* 1, p. 266; *Fontes*, p. 374.
[121] *1C* 98, *FAED* 1, p. 267; *Fontes*, p. 374.
[122] *1C* 102, *FAED* 1, p. 271; *Fontes*, p. 379.
[123] *1C* 102, *FAED* 1, p. 271; *Fontes*, p. 379.
[124] *1C* 107, *FAED* 1, p. 275; *Fontes*, p. 384.
[125] *1C* 106, *FAED* 1, p. 274; *Fontes*, p. 382.
[126] *1C* 106, *FAED* 1, p. 274; *Fontes*, p. 382.
[127] *1C* 108, *FAED* 1, p. 277; *Fontes*, p. 386.

First, according to Thomas' narrative, Francis "told them to sing *The Praises of the Lord* with a loud voice and joyful spirit."[128] As at the very beginning, so at the very end, his prayer is praise. From praise he moves to prayer with the word of God: "He himself, as best he could, broke into that psalm of David: *With a loud voice I cried to the Lord* . . . (Ps 142)."[129] Finally, "he asked that the Gospel according to John be read to him, starting with the passage that begins: *Six days before the Passover*, Jesus, knowing that the hour had come for him to pass from this world to the Father."[130] Always desirous of the word of God, Francis then found his deepest desire and final freedom in that Gospel proclamation of Jesus' Passover. Then Francis himself passed from this world to the Father.[131] His death was the expression of intimacy of obedience in the will of God, an obedience first desired through prayer of his conversion, proclaimed in the mission of his preaching, and finally embraced in the contemplative prayer of his transformation. Francis's life and death was built upon prayer that flowed toward, out of, and back into the word of God.

Remarkably, the death of Francis is not the end of book two. Thomas continues. He writes extensively about the dead body of Francis.[132] The narrative describing his dead body becomes the final thematic conclusion of book two, as the Greccio narrative was developed as the final thematic conclusion of book one. In the opening lines of his description of Francis's dead body, Thomas writes:

> "In fact, there appeared in him the form of the cross and passion *of the spotless lamb who washed away* the sins *of the world*. It seemed he had just been taken down from the cross, his hands and feet pierced by nails and his right side wounded by a lance.[133]

The "cross that redeemed the world" of his early liturgical antiphon appears in the final remains of Francis's body. The same cross of the "spotless lamb" offered on the altar of Greccio and the same

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[128] *1C* 109, *FAED* 1, p. 277; *Fontes*, p. 387.
[129] *1C* 109, *FAED* 1, p. 277; *Fontes*, p. 387.
[130] *1C* 110, *FAED* 1, p. 278; *Fontes*, p. 388.
[131] Thomas states Francis died in 1226 "on the fourth day before the Nones of October" (*1C* 88, *FAED* 1, p. 258; *Fontes*, p. 364), that is, in the evening of October 3rd.
[132] Cf. *1C FAED* 1, 112–118, pp. 279–287; *Fontes*, pp. 389–398.
[133] *1C* 112, *FAED* 1, p. 280; *Fontes*, p. 390.

cross with which he signed himself before the altar of the hermitage in the three-fold opening the Gospel book appears in his body. He was adorned with "the same arms of glory that in their great dignity belong to the King alone."[134] This is surely in return for the "saddles, shields, and spears" he had seen in the vision on the way to Apulia.[135]

As Francis had earlier at the Portiuncula committed the words of the Gospel "to his excellent memory"[136] and at Greccio had impressed the vision of the Incarnate word upon "the loving memory"[137] of the joyful crowd, so now "the wound in his side made them (the crowd) *remember* the One who had poured out blood and water from His own side and reconciled the world to the Father."[138] Memory of the word of God in the Gospel and memory of the child of Bethlehem at Greccio move toward memory of the passion. No wonder Thomas proclaims Francis's dead body a "sacrament to be remembered."[139] Is it not the very same sacrament of "the flesh of the immaculate and spotless lamb, Our Lord Jesus Christ, who *gave Himself for us*" on the altar at Greccio? Thomas explicitly makes this connection when he describes the dead body of Francis: "It presents to the eyes of faith that mystery in which the *blood of the spotless lamb*, flowing abundantly through the five wounds, washed away the sins of the world."[140]

The flesh of the lamb in the "humility of the incarnation," becomes the blood of the lamb in the "charity of the passion."[141] Only in the narrative of the Greccio story and again in his description of Francis's dead body does Thomas mention the "spotless lamb." The prayer of book one moves Francis to the word of God in the Gospel mission of the apostles to preach. This preaching mission ultimately leads him into the mystery and celebration of the incarnation of that

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[134] *1C* 114, *FAED* 1, p. 281; *Fontes*, p. 392.
[135] *IC* 5, *FAED* 1, p. 186; *Fontes*, p. 281.
[136] *1C* 22, *FAED* 1, p. 202; *Fontes*, p. 297.
[137] *1C* 86, *FAED* 1, p. 256; *Fontes*, p. 362.
[138] *1C* 113, *FAED* 1, p. 280; *Fontes*, p. 391.
[139] *1C* 114, *FAED* 1, p. 281; *Fontes*, p. 392.
[140] *1C* 112, *FAED* 1, p. 280; *Fontes*, p. 390. When Francis had earlier stripped himself of clothing before the bishop, the bishop realized his action "contained a mystery" (*1C* 15, *FAED* 1, 194; *Fontes*, p. 290). This mystery is now revealed in his naked dead body.
[141] Cf. *1C* 84, *FAED* 1, p. 254; *Fontes*, p. 359.

word during the "solemnities of the Mass" on the altar at Greccio. The concluding prayer of book one flows from the altar at Greccio immediately back into the word of the Gospel, seen in the opening lines of book two. That is, the opening of the Gospel book is explicitly placed on the altar in a hermitage. This second time, however, Francis is led to the "spotless lamb" in the context of the passion of Christ. Francis is to complete his final mission in the passion of Christ. This is his final prayer of transformation. His own flesh is to be transformed into the flesh of the "spotless lamb." Francis is likewise to be offered on the same altar of the lamb. Thomas describes Francis's own body as a sign of the mystery of Eucharistic prayer. Prayer ultimately brings him to the altar of the sacrifice of the cross that "redeemed the world."

Earlier in book two Thomas described Francis's final preaching efforts by noting how "he made of his whole body a tongue." At the end of Book two, it is clear Thomas emphasizes that Francis made his whole body a prayer. This is why, utilizing the powerful biblical image of the seraph Thomas writes that Francis, while "remaining on the cross, (he) merited to fly away to the highest order of spirits."[142] Francis's life of prayer opened his heart to the word of God which led him into the mystery of the "humility of the Incarnation," and, in turn, through contemplative and experiential mystical prayer of the altar into the transformative "charity of the passion." Nourished by the sacrament of the spotless lamb he was transformed into that spotless lamb so that even the blood that flowed from his suffering and death was the blood of that same spotless lamb. This prayer is of the highest order, even unto the prayer proper to the order of the Seraph's burning intimacy with God. This is why his transformative prayer can be called "seraphic." He was "worthy to be placed closer to (God the Father) Himself in the highest order of supercelestial spirits."[143]

Thomas's final comment on the body of Francis is his final comment on Francis's prayer. He gives a short commentary summarizing the whole narrative of Francis's final years of suffering, his mystical vision of the stigmata on Mt. La Verna and ultimately his death at St. Mary of the Portiuncula: "He was always with Jesus, Jesus in his

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[142] *1C* 115, *FAED* 1, p. 283; *Fontes*, p. 393.
[143] *1C* 114, *FAED* 1, p. 282; *Fontes*, p. 392.

heart, Jesus in his mouth, Jesus in his ears, Jesus in his eyes, Jesus in his hands, he bore Jesus always in his whole body."[144]

Prayer of the Church

This fourth section to be considered from *The Life of St. Francis* is found in the third book. It treats the canonization of Francis.[145] It is a short concluding narrative. Thomas utilizes this final section to describe the new life brought about in the church after Francis's death. His conversion, mission, and transformation bring new life and vitality to the "ancient structure" of the church. As Francis "stands by the throne of God,"[146] he remains "devoted to dealing effectively with the concerns of those he left behind on earth."[147] More specifically, Thomas connects the power of Francis's intercessory prayer for the church with his own prayer of transformation: "Why would he not be heard? *Conformed to the death of Christ Jesus by sharing in his sufferings*, he displays His sacred wounds in his hands, feet, and side."[148] Francis passed over into the heavenly realms, but he ever yet remains present in the church: "O true lamp of the world, shining more brilliantly than the sun in the *Church of Christ*!"[149]

The completion of Francis's life and mission effected new life and new mission in the Church and in the whole world: "Every day, everywhere people rejoice anew as the world is filled to overflowing with holy gifts from him."[150] Thomas describes the new life among the faithful as a life of freedom. "Both men and women are freed from distress merely by invoking his name."[151] The initial gift of Francis's own prayer of conversion becomes alive in the hearts of others. They experience "how free and freeing he was in everything."[152] The same stirrings of prayer in Francis's initial conversion find a way into the hearts of the multitudes.

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[144] *1C* 115, *FAED* 1, p. 283; *Fontes*, p. 394.
[145] Francis was canonized in Assisi on July 19, 1228 by Gregory IX at the church of St. George where he was first buried.
[146] *1C* 119, *FAED* 1, p. 288; *Fontes*, p. 398.
[147] *1C* 119, *FAED* 1, p. 288; *Fontes*, p. 398.
[148] *1C* 119, *FAED* 1, p. 288; *Fontes*, p. 399.
[149] *1C* 111, *FAED* 1, p. 278; *Fontes*, p. 389.
[150] *1C* 119, *FAED* 1, p. 289; *Fontes*, p. 399.
[151] *1C* 120, *FAED* 1, p. 290; *Fontes*, p. 400.
[152] *1C* 120, *FAED* 1, p. 290; *Fontes*, p. 400.

New joy in the Church is symbolized in the person of the Roman pontiff, the leader of Christians: "He rejoiced and exulted, dancing with joy, for in his own day he was seeing the Church of God being renewed with new mysteries that were ancient wonders."[153] The sense of the text harkens back to "the first work that blessed Francis undertook after he had gained his freedom . . . was to build a house of God.[154] His mission to rebuild the church is brought to completion in his death and canonization. In both cases, Thomas notes that the new joy in the Church is the restoration of "an ancient one."[155]

Because the whole church was alive in new freedom and filled with new joy, the pope hurried to Assisi to celebrate renewal of the Church. The actual description of the canonization begins with the pope's prayer at the tomb of Francis, just as Francis had earlier begun his new mission with prayer at the tomb of Saint Peter. "The Vicar of Christ, reached the place and first went down to the tomb of Saint Francis, he eagerly paid his respects with great reverence . . . and breaking into tears, he bowed his venerable head in an outpouring of devotion."[156] Things come full circle. The successor of the apostle Peter now prays at his tomb.

It is clear throughout the canonization narrative that the power of Francis's prayer in heaven opens up hearts of the faithful on earth. "They all now share a common good."[157] There is conversion of the whole Church. They all come to share the "holy gifts from him."[158] His first work "to build a house of God" is truly realized in the church where the assembly of believers gathers to celebrate the special gifts of grace that shower upon them. "His dead body, Thomas writes, "heals living bodies, just as when living it raised dead souls."[159]

Regarding the actual canonization, the pope "cries out in a ringing voice, and raising his hands to heaven proclaims the most blessed father Francis, whom the Lord has glorified in heaven and we venerate on earth, shall be enrolled in the catalogue of the saints."[160] All subsequently "join the pope in singing the *Te Deum laudamus* in

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[153] *1C* 121, *FAED* 1, p. 291; *Fontes*, p. 401.
[154] *1C* 18, *FAED* 1, p. 196; *Fontes*, p. 293.
[155] *1C* 18, *FAED* 1, p. 196; *Fontes*, p. 293.
[156] *1C* 123, *FAED* 1, p. 293; *Fontes*, p. 402.
[157] *1C* 120, *FAED* 1, p. 289; *Fontes*, pp. 399–400.
[158] *1C* 119, FAED 1, p. 289; *Fontes*, p. 399.
[159] *1C* 121, *FAED* 1, p. 291; *Fontes*, p. 401.
[160] *1C* 126, *FAED* 1, p. 295; *Fontes*, p. 405.

a loud voice."[161] The immediate result is praise. Thomas accents that the very first prayer of Francis, namely, praise, is also the final and fullest prayer of the Church. The very last paragraph of Book three describes this great chorus:

> And there rises the cry of *many peoples* praising God;
> the earth echoes the booming sound,
> the air is filled with jubilation,
> and the ground is soaked with tears.
> *They sing new songs*
> and servants *of God rejoice*
> in melody of the Spirit.
> Sweet sounding instruments are playing
> as hymns are sung with musical voices.
> *A very sweet fragrance is flowing there*
> and an even more pleasant melody is echoing there,
> moving everyone deeply.
> The day is breaking, colored with radiant sunbeams.
> There are green *branches* of olive
> and fresh boughs *of other trees*.
> They are all dressed in festive clothing, shining brightly,
> while the blessing of peace gladden all.[162]

The whole text of Thomas' *Life of Francis* concludes with this incredible universal and cosmic mission to praise God. There was "the cry of many peoples praising God" and "the earth echoes the booming sound." They sing "new songs . . . in the melody of the Spirit" and "sweet sounding instruments are playing." The entire universe joins the praise. A new "day is breaking, colored with radiant sunbeams."

Praise was the first fruit of Francis's prayer of conversion. After finding new freedom in renunciation of his inheritance, "he began in a loud voice to make the woods resound with praises to the Creator of all."[163] At Greccio he then stood "before the manger, filled with sighs"[164] and the "boulders echo(ed) back the joyful crowd."[165] However, now in his canonization praise to the "Creator of all" is proclaimed to be the mission of the entire church. Again, Francis is presented as "the herald of the Great King"[166] who leads all peoples

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[161] *1C* 126, *FAED* 1, p. 296; *Fontes*, p. 405.
[162] *1C* 126, *FAED* 1, p. 296; *Fontes*, pp. 405–406.
[163] *1C* 16, *FAED* 1, p. 194; *Fontes*, p. 291.
[164] *1C* 85, *FAED* 1, p. 255; *Fontes*, p. 361.
[165] *1C* 85, *FAED* 1, p. 255; *Fontes*, p. 361.
[166] *1C* 120. p. 289; *Fontes*, p. 399. See also *1C* 16, *FAED* 1, p. 194; *Fontes*, p. 291.

and all of creation into that great chorus of praise of the Triune God. In the prayer of conversion is ultimately the final and genuine mission of the whole church. The first prayer experienced in conversion becomes the final and eschatological realization of the "new mystery" in "ancient wonder." Thus, Thomas appropriately concludes the entirety of his text, *The Life of St. Francis*, in a manner that penetrates the beginning, the end, and the heart of his theology of prayer: "*All the people echoed the praise of God*, offering gifts of thanks to Francis in honor of the Most High Trinity. Amen."[167]

Conclusion

In the *Life of St. Francis* Thomas moves Francis forward from "a blessed beginning to an even more blessed end."[168] In the beginning the prayer of praise flows forth from his hidden and "inner most self;" and at the end there "rises the cry of *many peoples* praising God." The "new life of grace" given to Francis at the beginning of his conversion is now the "common good" that all share. In praise, with the pope "dancing with joy," the Church of God is "being renewed with new mysteries that were ancient wonders." The prayer of praise threads together the whole text composed by Brother Thomas. What began secluded in a cave is realized in the choruses of heaven.

At the center point between beginning and end is the "flesh of the immaculate and spotless lamb, our Lord Jesus Christ who *gave Himself for us.*" As Francis opened his heart and committed to "his excellent memory" the gospel words of the gospel, he was led to the altar of the lamb and from there into the passion of Christ. Prayer of praise is participation in the sacrifice of praise, in the great Passover, realized on the altar in the solemnities of the Mass. There, Francis was brought so intimately into the lamb's sacrifice of praise before the Father so that "there appeared in him the form of the cross and passion of the spotless lamb."[169] He, too, becomes like the lamb, a great "sacrament to be remembered." In and through the prayer of

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[167] *1C* 126, *FAED* 1, p. 296; *Fontes*, 406.
[168] *1C* 119, *FAED* 1, p. 288; *Fontes*, p. 398.
[169] *1C* 112, *FAED* 1, p. 280; *Fontes*, p. 390

praise, from the beginnings of wandering through the forest to his final standing in glory before the throne of God, Thomas gives his reader an identity that is consistent. Francis is indeed "the herald of the Great King."

CONTEMPLATION AND THE ACADEMY

THE PROTHEMES OF BONAVENTURE'S *SERMONES DOMINICALES* AND MINORITE PRAYER

Timothy J. Johnson

> By virtue of what took place through the passion of the Lord, I, a servant of the cross, composed this present collection of sermons to praise the name of Christ and to honor his sacred cross. . . .[1]

In *Exemplum e letteratura*, Carlo Delcorno notes that although they are not sermon models, even the *reportationes* of Bonaventure's sermons on Francis of Assisi have a normative value given his theological authority and position as Minister General of the Minorite Order.[2] Consequently, a collection of model sermons such as the *Sermones dominicales*, or *Sunday Sermons*, edited by Bonaventure sometime between April 24, 1267 and May 17, 1268, are particularly significant; these texts constitute an eminent expression of the Minister General's desire, on both the theological and institutional level, to direct the preaching endeavors of his Minorite brothers.[3] His earlier *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* and extensive personal preaching praxis evidence an intense interest in this ministry essential to the Minorites. In particular, Bonaventure's theological concerns permeate the *Sunday Sermons*, including a marked interest in prayer evidenced in the prothemes attached to twenty-five of the fifty sermons. As Jacques Bougerol indicates, this unique aspect of the medieval sermon underlines the necessity of prayer.[4] This essay will examine the role of prothemes

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[1] "Quo facto, virtute dominicae passionis, ego servus crucis, qui praesens sermonum opusculum ad laudem nominis Christi et sanctae crucis honorem compegi. . . ." *Sermo 40*, n. 4, *Sancti Bonaventurae Sermones dominicales*, ed. Jacques Guy Bougerol (Grottaferrata, 1977), p. 407. A highly abbreviated version of this essay, presented at the 39th International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan, appeared without the critical apparatus in *The Cord*. See Timothy J. Johnson, "Preaching and Praying on the Seine: Minorite Theology and the Prothemes in Bonaventure's *Sermones dominicales*," *The Cord* 55/1 (2005), pp. 2–9.

[2] Carlo Delcorno, *Exemplum e letteratura: tra medievo e rinascimento* (Bologna, 1989), p. 46.

[3] San Bonaventura, *Sermoni domenicali*, trans. Eliodoro Mariani, intro., notes, and index Jacques Guy Bougerol (Rome, 1992), p. 22.

[4] Jacques Guy Bougerol, *Introduction to the Works of Saint Bonaventure*, trans. José de Vinck (Paterson, 1964), p. 149.

in preaching, delineate the salient aspects of the early Minorite perspective on prayer, and detail how Bonaventure utilizes prothemes throughout the *Sunday Sermons* as a way to teach the Minorite theology of prayer as articulated at the University of Paris. Bonaventure's striking appeal to divine piety in selected prothemes is afforded particular attention as this practice exemplifies how preaching presupposes the Minorite emphasis on interiority.

Prothemes and Medieval Preaching

The thirteenth century witnessed the growing popularity in Paris and elsewhere of the *sermo modernus*; namely, an innovative style of clerical preaching from the close of the twelfth century that developed a thematic approach to a particular scripture text as opposed to the earlier patristic technique of verse commentary.[5] Numerous authors of the period offered *Artes praedicandi* to assure the proper formulation of this emerging literary genre.[6] The structure of the sermon included the theme, the protheme, the initial prayer, and the subdivision of the theme.[7] The *Ave Maria* was the most common prayer recited following the protheme.[8] While examples of twelfth century preaching demonstrate various elements of the genre, the protheme did not appear until the early thirteenth century.[9] Bonaventure's *Sunday Sermons*, which were composed around 1267–1268,[10] as well as other model sermon collections of the thirteenth century Parisian mendicants, often included prothemes linking academic biblical studies with the pastoral ministry of preaching.[11]

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[5] M. Michèle Mulchahey, *"First the Bow is Bent in Study. . . ." Dominican Education before 1350* (Toronto, 1998), pp. 401–419.

[6] Nicole Bériou, "Les sermons latins après 1200" in *The Sermon*, ed. Beverly Kienzle (Turnhout, 2000), p. 370. Bériou mentions the date of 1210 in *L'avènement des maîtres de la Parole: La prédication à Paris au XIIIe siècle*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1998), p. 259.

[7] Bougerol, *Introduction to the Works of Saint Bonaventure*, p. 137.

[8] *Prier au moyen âge: pratiques et expériences*, eds. Nicole Bériou, Jacques Berlioz, and Jean Longère, intro. Nicole Bériou (Turnhout, 1991), p. 210.

[9] Bériou, "Les sermons latins," pp. 397–398.

[10] Bougerol, *Sermones dominicales*, p. 29.

[11] D. L. d'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars: Sermons diffused from Paris before 1300* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 187–188.

Prothemes, according to Thomas Charland's study of the *Artes praedicandi*, are inseparable from prayer.[12] As the Minorite John of Wales states, "The prothema is added, however, in order to create a certain way to ask for divine assistance."[13] Following the announcement of the biblical theme, the preacher quotes another text that is intended to unite the initial prayer to the declared theme. Bonaventure's sermon from the *Third Sunday of Advent* is indicative of this dynamic. After declaring the theme from John 1:26: *In your midst stood one whom you did not know*, he adds the protheme:

> *While Peter was speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came upon those who were listening*, etc. Acts 10:44. These last words proposed here describe three noteworthy things pertaining to every preacher. The first is the certitude of the one speaking mentioned with the premise: *While Peter was speaking*. The name Peter is interpreted as the one who knows. The second is the swiftness of the one poured out mentioned by the following: *the Holy Spirit came*. The third is the multitude of people listening mentioned by stating: *upon all those who were listening to the words*. Given these three things, let us all devotedly implore the grace of divine piety, that it might fill the one speaking with certain words and establish the one listening among the multitude of the blessed. In this way, both the one speaking and the one listening might rejoice in the swift effusion of the Holy Spirit by whom I might say and you understand these matters to the praise and glory of our Mediator and the healthy and consolation of our souls. Amen.[14]

Bonaventure's usage of the protheme thus affords him the opportunity to invite the audience into a prayer to Christ the Mediator, who, according to John 1:26 stood among the Jewish people and as

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[12] Thomas Charland, *Artes praedicandi: contribution à l'histoire de la rhétorique au moyen âge* (Ottawa, 1936) p. 126.

[13] "Assumitur autem prothema ut per ipsum fiat quaedam via ad divinum auxilium impetrandum." For this text, see Charland, p. 126, n. 1.

[14] "*Loquente Petro verba haec, cecidit Spiritus sanctus super omnes qui audiebant verbum*, etc. Actuum 10, 44. In his verbis ultimo propositis describuntur tria notabilia cuilibet praedicatori convenientia; quorum primum est conferentis certitudo quae tangitur cum praemittitur: *loquente Petro*; interpretatur enim agnoscens; secundum est infundentis promptitudo quae tangitur cum sequitur: *cecidit Spiritus sanctus*; tertium est audientis populi multitudo quae tangitur cum subiungitur: *super omnes qui audiebant verbum*. Ratione igitur horum trium, devote omnes divinae pietatis gratiam imploremos, ut conferentem impleat verborum certitudine et audientem statuat in sanctorum multitudine ut tandem conferens et audiens gaudeant in se infundentis Spiritus promptitudine, qua mediante possim ego aliqua dicere et vos intelligere quae sint ad laudem et gloriam Mediatoris nostri et salutem et consolationem animarum nostrarum. Amen." *Sermo 4*, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 156–157.

he will illustrate, is the perfect medium of reconciliation between humanity and God.

As integral as prothemes were to prayer, preachers utilized them for various purposes and those who compiled sermon collections did not always retain them.[15] Humbert of Romans, who entered the Order of Preachers in Paris in 1224 and served as Master from 1255 to 1263, wrote in *On the Formation of Preachers* that the protheme was not necessary but, when employed, should be followed by prayer asking for grace to be granted during the sermon.[16] His thoughts regarding the nature of the protheme are of particular import when examining Bonaventure's sermons, given the shared emphasis on preaching among the mendicants and the cultural context proper to both men. Prothemes, according to Humbert, are suitable for formal occasions, while waiting for people to find a seat, or to inform those who may be unaware of the reason for the specific sermon. They allow the preacher to identify himself and to announce, for example, that he belongs to a religious community such as the Order of Preachers or Minors. Brevity and beauty are to mark a finely composed protheme, lest the listeners be bored at the outset and left ill-disposed and inattentive to what is to follow. Depending on the circumstances and content of the sermon, the protheme might address the responsibilities of the people in attendance, the topic or text of the sermon, the current liturgical season, or the nature of preaching.[17] Their specificity, as detailed by Humbert, may explain why they are often omitted in sermon collections. Furthermore, preachers themselves rarely wrote out the protheme, preferring instead to improvise on a theme chosen in advance and developed in accord with the *sermo modernus*.[18]

Given the repeated absence and, in the words of Nicole Bériou, apparent "fragility" of prothemes in medieval sermon collections, their frequent appearance in the *Sunday Sermons* is noteworthy and fortunate.[19] They foster a detailed study of the relationship between

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[15] Bériou, "Les sermons latins," p. 398 and Mulchahey, *"First the Bow is Bent in Study . . . ."*, p. 406, n. 20.

[16] Humbert of Romans, *Treatise on the Formation of Preachers* in *Early Dominicans: Selected Writings*, ed. and intro. Simon Tugwell (Mahwah, 1982), p. 318.

[17] Humbert of Romans, *Treatise on the Formation of Preachers*, pp. 317–320.

[18] Bougerol, *Sermones dominicales*, p. 44.

[19] After delineating the role of the protheme vis-à-vis prayer, Nicole Bériou states "On notera cependant que le prothème est une pièce facultative dans la structure

prayer and preaching, which Bonaventure explored both as Master Regent at the University of Paris and Minister General of the Minorite Order. When redacting the *Commentary on Luke* as a guide to preachers, he reminded the brothers of the role of prayer in the life of those called to proclaim the Word of God. Just as Jesus looked to heaven before sharing the loaves with the crowd, so too should the preacher turn to God:

> From this a pattern is given to preachers . . . but as the Lord multiplied the five barley loaves with a divine blessing, so the entire abundance of true doctrine ought to be drawn from the *foundation of Sacred Scripture*, multiplied through *prayer*, by which it is beheld in heaven, and with *devotion*, by which it is blessed, *meditation* by which it is broken, and *preaching* by which it is distributed and explained.[20]

This spiritual explanation of the place of prayer in preaching is an essential element of the brothers' identity as *viri spirituales* or spiritual men, whose pastoral ministry is grounded in the contemplative life. In Bonaventure's careful construct of the evangelical life, the category of spiritual men previously identified with Joachim of Fiore's eschatological theology is refashioned into the Minorite model par excellence. The *Commentary on Luke* defines the *viri spirituales* as humble servants who, following the example of Christ and the apostles, are willing to take the lowest seat at the wedding banquet.[21] With heads raised in expectation of divine providence, they are to raise their eyes in reflection, voices in preaching and hands in good works.[22] The narrative of Martha and Mary further delineates the rhythm of prayer and action among the *viri spirituales*. However preferable contemplation may be, active involvement in the world is necessary and

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du sermon, et qu'elle est fragile: les compilateurs ou les auteurs de recueils peuvent prendre la liberté de l'omettre." See Bériou, "Les sermons latins," p. 398. Bougerol points out that prothemes are not found in all of Bonaventure's *Sunday Sermons*, due to the interests of particular copyists. Canon regulars and Cistercians would find little utility in the specific nature of Bonaventure's prothemes and, consequently, dispense with them as they copied the corpus of the *Sunday Sermons*, see Bougerol, *Sermones dominicales*, p. 44.

[20] "Ex quo forma datur praedicantibus . . . sed sicut Dominus multiplicavit divina benedictione quinque panes hordeaceos, sic omnis abundantia verae doctrinae sumi debet ex *fundamento sacrae Scripturae*, multiplicanda per *orationem*, qua in caelum respicitur, et *devotione*, qua benedicitur, *meditatione*, qua frangitur, et *praedicatione*, qua distribuitur et explicatur." *Comm Lc* 9.28 (7.224b).

[21] *Comm Lc* 9.89 (7.245a).

[22] *Comm Lc* 21.49 (7.536b).

those who are called to serve must learn to integrate both dimensions as suggested by Jacob's vision of the ascending and descending angels.[23] Bonaventure turns to Jacob again in the *Journey of the Mind into God*[24] and the *Major Life*[25] to offer Francis of Assisi as the perfect exemplar for spiritual men.

The context of the text from the *Major Life* is especially noteworthy since it treats the question of prayer within Bonaventure's reinterpretation of Francis as preacher. In contrast to Thomas of Celano's earlier rendition in the *First Life* of the brothers' vision of Francis at Rivotorto,[26] the Poverello now preaches regularly in the cathedral of Assisi. Francis models the active and contemplative synthesis by offering a sermon on Sunday morning and then retiring to prayer in the evening. He appears to the brothers around midnight in the vision and returns subsequently to uncover the secrets of their consciences, to encourage them by recalling the vision, and to predict the growth of the Order. The account from the *Major Life* concludes, albeit with Joachmite undertones,[27] by claiming that "God rendered Francis, like Elijah, a chariot and charioteer of spiritual men."[28] There is little doubt that the brothers are summoned in the *Major Life* to follow the evangelical example presented by Bonaventure, whose reworking of the hagiographical material constructs a paradigm of Minorite urban prayer and preaching representative of the clerical ministry of the mid-thirteenth century.[29]

The *Sunday Sermons* are situated within this Bonaventurian configuration of the Minorite ecclesial mission and intended for the educated, clerical audience he was accustomed to addressing. The various social grouping of medieval Christians, frequently delineated in numerous collections of *ad status* sermons, are conspicuously absent

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[23] *Comm Lc* 10.75 (7.276a).
[24] *Itin* 7.3 (5.312b).
[25] *LMj* 4.4 (8.513b–514a); *FAED* 2, pp. 551–552.
[26] *1C* 18.47, *FAED* 1, p. 224; *Fontes*, pp. 321–322.
[27] Stanislao da Campagnola, "Dai 'viri spirituales' di Gioacchino da Fiore ai 'fratres spirituales' di Francesco d'Assisi': Una tipologia religiosa," in *Francesco e francescanesimo nella società dei secoli XIII–XIV* (S. Maria degli Angeli, 1999), p. 167. On the *viri spirituales* see also the following essay "Contemplation and the Formation of the *vir spiritualis* in Bonaventure's *Collationes in Hexaemeron*" by Jay M. Hammond.
[28] ". . . qui virorum spiritualium, ut alter Elias, factus fuerat a Deo *currus et auriga*." *LMj* 4.4 (8.513b–514a); *FAED* 2, p. 552.
[29] Edith Pásztor, "La chiesa dei Minori," in *Lo spazio dell'umiltà: Atti del convegno di studi sull'edilizia dell'ordine dei minori* (Fara Sabina, 1984), p. 64.

throughout the corpus the Seraphic Doctor proposes.[30] As Carolyn Muessing writes, the identification of sermon audiences is frequently problematic due to the absence of explicit information in liturgical cycle collections;[31] however, this is not the case with the *Sunday Sermons*. Bougerol notes the Seraphic Doctor produced, perhaps in collaboration with his secretary, Marco di Montefaltro, a model Sunday sermon collection for Minorites dedicated to the ministry of the word. As Minister General, he underscores his commitment to this primitive apostolic ideal, which was dear to the Poverello, throughout the process of preparing the *Sunday Sermons*.[32] Where available, rubrics attached to the manuscripts forming the critical edition of the *Sunday Sermons* assist in designating the ecclesial context where the sermons were first pronounced; however, the majority of Bonaventure's sermons were composed *de novo* for the sole purpose of addressing themes not found among his earlier sermons. His efforts included the inclusion of material from other sources, such as the *Commentary on Luke* and the *Commentary on the Sentences*.[33] The subsequent text of the *Sunday Sermons* stands as a homogenous literary opus; upon examination it emerges as a consciously constructed presentation of the identity, interior disposition, and thematic concerns of the Minister General's idealized preacher and not merely a collection of previous material of a particular preacher. This objective can be traced through the *Sunday Sermons*, where Bonaventure writes of the ecclesial import of prelates, priests, and religious dedicated to the contemplative study and active proclamation of the Scriptures.[34] The prothemes of the *Sunday Sermons* crystallize Bonaventure's project by uniting the call to preaching with the invitation to pray.

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[30] On the audiences for Bonaventure's sermons, see Sophronius Clasen, "Der hl. Bonaventura als Prediger," *Wissenschaft und Weisheit* 24 (1961), pp. 85–113 and *Sancti Bonaventurae Sermons de tempore*, ed. Jacques Guy Bougerol (Paris, 1990), pp. 21–34.

[31] Carolyn Muessing, "Preacher, Sermon and Audience: An Introduction" in *Preacher, Sermon and Audience in the Middle Ages*, ed. Carolyn Muessing (Leiden, 2002), pp. 6–7.

[32] Bougerol, *Sermoni domenicali*, p. 22.

[33] Bougerol, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 82–108; esp. p. 108.

[34] In addition to numerous prothemes in the *Sermones dominicales*, see *Sermo 12*, n. 10, p. 216; *Sermo 15*, n. 10, pp. 238–239; *Sermo 16*, n. 10, pp. 248–249; *Sermo 18*, n. 12, p. 264; *Sermo 20*, n. 4, p. 274; *Sermo 24*, n. 8, pp. 306–307; and *Sermo 36*, n. 4, pp. 380–381.

Minorite Prayer and Parisian Theology

Bonaventure's emphasis on prayer and preaching in texts like the *Commentary on Luke* is also evident in his frequent recourse to prothemes; consequently the prothemes of the *Sunday Sermons*, which lead to prayer, focus on preaching, and are directed toward contemplative mendicants, become an ideal medium for conveying the Minorite theology of prayer. Since they had established themselves at the University of Paris, Minorite theologians had elaborated a perspective on prayer that both continued the Augustinian-Victorine predilection for interiority and distinguished them from the Order of Preachers. The efforts of the early Minorite theologians are extant in several texts, including *Questions on Prayer*,[35] *On Prayer*,[36] Bonaventure's *Commentary on the Sentences*,[37] as well as other writings from the Seraphic Doctor.

If Ignatius Brady is correct in attributing the *Questions on Prayer* to Jean de la Rochelle, it is the earliest of the three texts, dating perhaps to his tenure as Regent Master of the Minorite school in Paris between 1236 and 1245.[38] This collection of eight questions presents a unique, yet unexamined insight into the issues central to the nascent Minorite teaching on prayer. Bonaventure, who entered the Parisian novitiate in 1243, would have been familiar with the *Questions on Prayer* since they, together with his *Commentary on the Sentences*, were utilized by William of Melitona in the composition of the lengthy *On Prayer* in the *Summa Alexandri* between 1257 and 1259.[39] Pope

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[35] *De oratione*, Codex Vatic. Palat. Lat, Rome: Vatican Library, fol. 43va–46va. This text will be referred to as *Questions on Prayer* to distinguish it from *De oratione* in vol. 4 of the *Summa Alexandri*.

[36] *De oratione, satisfactionis parte* in vol. 4 of *Alexandri Alensis Universae Theologiae summa in quattour partes ab ipsomet authore distributa* (Cologne, 1622) pp. 667b–737b. This text will be referred to as *On Prayer*.

[37] *III Sent* d. 17, a. 2, q. 1, concl. (3.371a–375b); *IV Sent* d. 15, p. 2, a. 1, q. 4 (4.367a–369b); and *IV Sent* d. 15, p. 2, a. 2, q. 3 (4.373a–375b).

[38] Ignatius Brady, "The Opera Omnia of St. Bonaventure Revisited" in *Proceedings of the Seventy Centenary of the Death of Saint Bonaventure*, ed. Paschal Foley (St. Bonaventure, N.Y., 1975), p. 56. Balduinus Distelbrink's attempt to attribute the *Questiones de oratione* in *Bonaventurae scripta, authentica dubia vel spuria critice recensita* (Rome, 1975) p. 14, is untenable given Brady's argument and evidence suggesting the *Quaestiones de oratione* were utilized in *De oratione* but are not found in Bonaventure's own work on prayer. On the *Quaestiones de oratione*, see also Victorinus Doucet, "De quaestionibus S. Bonaventurae adscriptis in Cod. Vaticano Palatino Lat. 612," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 26 (1933), pp. 490–491.

[39] Timothy J. Johnson, "The Summa Alexandri vol IV and the Development of the Franciscan Theology of Prayer," *Miscellanea Francescana* 93 (1993), pp. 526–531.

Alexander IV's request in 1255, that the Minorites complete Alexander's *Summa* after his death in 1245, prompted William to compile *On Prayer* and numerous other questions, thus concluding the Fourth Book of the *Summa*.[40] His collaborative efforts resulted in a rich, albeit frequently ignored reflection of mid-thirteenth century Minorite Parisian teaching that, together with the *Questions on Prayer* and the *Commentary on the Sentences*, elucidates the theological context Bonaventure drew from when fashioning his prothemes. These texts indicate several of the constitutive elements of the Minorite perspective on prayer such as the affective interiority of mental prayer, the dynamic relationship between rationality and love, the personal and communal utility of vocal prayer, and the dialectic of divine liberality and human indigence.

In the *Collations on the Six Days*, which Bonaventure preached in Paris in the spring of 1272, the Order of Preachers and the Order of Minors are equated with the Cherubim within the contemplative hierarchy of the Church.[41] There is, nevertheless, a nuanced distinction between the two, for while the Preachers are dedicated to speculation and then unction, the Minors invert the emphasis in imitation of Saint Francis, who asked: "What value is there to knowing many things and tasting nothing?"[42] Scholars have long noted this insistence on interiority among the followers of Francis of Assisi in opposition to Dominic's followers.[43] Simon Tugwell asserts the early Preachers manifested scant interest in the interior life, choosing to ignore issues of mystical theology in favor of intercessory prayers, devotions, and meditations directed toward the apostolic life. The question of the contemplative ascent to God, so central to Bonaventure and other Minorite theologians in Paris, tended to remain a purely speculative issue among the Preachers.[44] According to Scott Matthews, the different perspectives of the Minorites and Preachers, identifiable in their respective founders and articulated by their schoolmen, suggest diverse and incompatible understandings of the encounter with the divine whereby the Preachers

[40] Johnson, "The Summa Alexandri," pp. 524–525.
[41] *Hex* 22.21 (5.440b).
[42] "Multa enim scire et nihil gustare quid valet?" *Hex* 22.21 (5.440b).
[43] Johann Auer, *Die Entwicklung der Gnadenlehre in der Hochscholastik I. Das Wesen der Gnade* (Freiburg, 1942), p. 347.
[44] Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, pp. 3–4.

looked outside the soul for God and the Minorites turned within the soul.[45]

The presence of God within is undoubtedly a common thread Minorite writers weave throughout their treatments of prayer. Readers are reminded, time and time again, that the divine is nearer to them than they could ever hope to be to themselves. The *Questions on Prayer* distinguishes, however, between presence as existence and presence as evidence, lest some neglect prayer. God certainly is more present and intimate to the heart than it is to itself, yet knowledge of this reality is grounded in the existence of God, whose presence is ubiquitous, while by nature prayer longs for God as both absent and immanent.[46] Taking up the same concern, *On Prayer* states the God is everywhere by means of essence, power, and presence. This intimate presence, however, is not immediately evident. Given the apparent absence, prayer attempts to draw God near, yet paradoxically, draws the one who prays to God, as Dionysius teaches.[47] In the *Commentary on the Sentences*, Bonaventure responds to the claim that there is an infinite distance between humanity and God, by noting the ascent into God presupposes both intimacy and distance:

> Concerning that objection, that there are infinite degrees; it must be said that the ascent into God can be viewed in two ways: either in regard to the *aspect of presence*, so then any creature by nature leads into God and the degrees are not infinite; or in regard to *equality of the comparison*, so in fact they are infinite because the created good, in as much as it is a duplicate, can never be equated with the uncreated.[48]

The presence of the divine is most evident in the memory, intelligence, and will proper to rational creatures.[49] In the *Journey of the Mind into God*, Bonaventure returns to the theme of interiority and fashions a model of prayer that guides contemplatives through the

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[45] Scott Matthews, *Reason, Community, and Religious Tradition: Anselm's Argument and the Friars* (Aldershot, 2001), p. 214.

[46] *Quaestiones de oratione*, fol. 44ra.

[47] *De oratione*, p. 686b.

[48] "Ad illud quod obiicitur, quod semper sunt infiniti gradus; dicendum, quod ascensus in Deum potest dupliciter: aut quantum ad *aspectum praesentiae*; et sic quaelibet creatura nata est ducere in Deum, nec sic sunt infiniti gradus; aut quantum ad *aequalitatem aequiparantiae*; et sic verum est, quod sunt infiniti, quia bonum creatum, quantumcumque duplicatum, nunquam aequiparatur increato." *I Sent* d. 3. art. unicus, q. 2, concl. (1.72b–73a).

[49] *I Sent* d. 3. art. unicus, q. 2, concl. (1.73b).

images and vestiges of the exterior world, so as to uncover within the image of God, reflected in the powers of memory, intelligence, and will. When transformed by faith, hope, and love, these powers of the soul mirror the Triune God, thus fostering an ever-deeper entrance into the mystery of divine darkness, foreshadowed in the stigmata of Francis of Assisi on Mount Alverna.[50]

The Minorite interest in the interior aspects of spirituality in general, and prayer in particular, is readily apparent in the first question from the *Questions on Prayer*, which asks if mental prayer is required. An affirmative response rests on John 4:23, where Jesus states the Father seeks those who would adore him in spirit and truth, and is exemplified by Hugh of Saint Victor's understanding of prayer as a humble, pious turning toward God rooted in the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love.[51] The second question then recognizes the spiritual and corporal composition proper to human beings, thereby identifying mental prayer with the interior movement of heart and vocal prayer with exterior speech.[52] There is no compulsion or obligation to such mental prayer according to *On Prayer*.[53] In contrast to their fellow mendicants, who held prayer to be a religious duty and linked to obligation and the cardinal virtues, the Minorites consider mental prayer to be an expression of the theological virtues that was not driven by debt, but governed by free choice.[54] Prayer from the heart, Bonaventure says in the *Commentary on the Sentences*, is most satisfactory but cannot be commanded, for example even from a penitent by a priest, since it is dependent on grace.[55]

Mental prayer encompasses the spiritual ascent of the soul into God, a theological motif prevalent in the writings of the Parisian Minorites. Of particular import in their deliberations are the respective roles of the intellect and affection. Question eight in the *Questions on Prayer*, which William of Melitona later includes in *On Prayer*, reads: ". . . which rises higher in prayer, the intellect or affection?"[56] This

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[50] *Itin* (5.295a–313b).
[51] *Quaestiones de oratione*, fol. 43va.
[52] *Quaestiones de oratione*, fol. 43vb.
[53] *De oratione*, p. 677a.
[54] Johnson, "The Summa Alexandri," pp. 533–535.
[55] *IV Sent* d. 15, p. 2, a. 2, q. 3, concl. (4.374b).
[56] *Quaestiones de oratione*, fol. 46ra. See also *De oratione*, pp. 707a–708b where John of Middleton makes extensive use of the *Quaestiones de oratione*.

is hardly an idle, speculative investigation for, "to understand this question in a knowledgeable manner is useful, but to understand it through experience is happiness."[57] The initial arguments in favor of affection emphasize the preeminence of charity, signified by the Seraph, as opposed to the intellect that is equated with knowledge and represented by the Cherubim. While knowledge never loses itself, the devout prayer of the pure mind gives way to ecstasy, union, and transformation. Counter arguments claim, for example, that affection is dependent on the intellect, and thus subordinate, and that the beatific vision most directly concerns sight, and not touch, which is identified with affection. The author of the *Questions of Prayer* provides a nuanced resolution, noting the relative state of the person praying is crucial. The intellect dominates the prayer of those who, lacking charity, limp along without devotion while affection marks the prayer of those, who like Jacob, encounter God in contemplation. Humbled in the flesh and transformed in spirit, they receive the name of Israel, that is, one who sees God. Ultimately their spiritual vision is superseded by the spiritual touch, intimated by the kiss of the lovers in the Canticle of Canticles that alone unites them.[58]

The intellect remains an essential element, however, of the prayerful ascent into God. *Questions on Prayer* notes, "Whence two things are necessary in prayer, that is, that the intellect is turned to God, and affections ordered to God."[59] *On Prayer* emphasizes the relationship of the intellect to prayer by citing John Damascene's definition of prayer as the ascent of the intellect into God at the outset of an impressive, panoramic consideration of ancient, biblical, patristic, and medieval views on prayer.[60] The development of the argument in *On Prayer* indicates some reject Damascene's position because they consider the affective aspect of prayer to be of paramount concern and are aware that the intellect can impede the effort to pray. The Minorite response identifies the intellect and affections, that is to say, knowledge and love, to be in apparent opposition but they are not mutually exclusive. The cognitive faculty recognizes and meditates

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[57] ". . . quod scire istam questionem modo scientiali utilitatis est, scire autem per experientiam felicitatis est." *Quaestiones de oratione*, fol. 46rb.

[58] *Quaestiones de oratione*, fol. 46va.

[59] "Unde in oratione duo sunt necessaria, scilicet, intellectus ad Deum conversus, et affectus ad Deum ordinatus." *Quaestiones de oratione*, fol. 44vb.

[60] *De oratione*, p. 667b.

upon the depths of human need and divine mercy, thus preceding the affections, which then seek God's grace.[61] It will fall to Bonaventure to fashion the classical treatment of the intellect in prayer, the *Journey of the Mind into God*. The Seraphic Doctor already sketched out the main lines of his thought earlier in the *Commentary on the Sentences* and the *Commentary on Luke*.[62] The *Journey of the Mind into God* begins with the recognition of need before God, thus giving rein to a plea for grace, which introduces an ever-deepening knowledge of the divine.[63]

Without denigrating the intellect, the Parisian Minorites continually underscore the crucial nature of affection in the ascent into God; hence, the preeminent role of prothemes in Bonaventure's theology of prayer. The invitation to public, audible prayer at the outset of the *Sunday Sermons* is intended to elicit the interior devotion of mental prayer. A text common to *On Prayer* and the *Commentary on the Sentences* notes such vocal prayer enflames the affections thereby stirring the hearts of those who seek God in sincerity. This expression of prayer fosters an interior longing for the divine even among those not immediately disposed toward spiritual matters.[64] In the *Breviloquium* Bonaventure reminds his confreres that numerous obstacles, distractions, and fears may impede the efforts of the faithful, but the audible articulation of prayer both awakens their affections and focuses their thoughtful intentions.[65] Not only is this perceptible prayer the harbinger of the contemplative ascent into God, it also serves as an exemplar for others as Christ demonstrated on the vigil of his death. In the *Commentary on John*, Bonaventure responds to a query concerning the utility of the Lord's Prayer at the Last Supper. The words uttered by Christ taught the disciples how to pray, in addition to seeking assistance and consolation for them.[66] Given the pedagogical dimension of prayer, those leading public prayer in the context of liturgy are urged, according to *On Prayer*, to preside so as to excite the devotion of the community.[67] Either in private prayer or public prayer,

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[61] *De oratione*, p. 668b.
[62] Timothy J. Johnson, *The Soul in Ascent: Bonaventure on Poverty, Prayer, and Union with God* (Quincy, 2000), pp. 147–161.
[63] *Itin* c. 1, ns. 1–2 (5.296a–297a).
[64] *De oratione*, p. 690a and *IV Sent* d. 15, p. 2, a, 2, q. 3, concl. (4.374a–b).
[65] *Brev* 5.10 (5.264a).
[66] *Comm Jn* 17.3 (6.471b).
[67] *De oratione*, p. 690a–b.

the element of interiority is crucial as Bonaventure reminds novices who, as clerics, will be called upon to preach and lead others in prayer. In his *Rule for Novices* the Minister General writes that God looks to the heart and not to the lips:

> . . . since prayer is nothing other than the 'ascent of the intellect to God,' before you begin prayer, prepare yourself for internal devotion if you wish to attain a taste of the divine. For as Gregory testifies, 'prayer is of the heart and not of the lips,' nor, he says, does God so much pay attention to the words of the one asking, but looks upon the heart of the one praying.' Therefore the Wise One says: *Son, prepare your heart before prayer and do not wish to be like the person who tempts God.* For the one praying is said to tempt God when without any preparation of the heart, he runs to vocal prayer and seeks divine speculation for himself. He will hardly or never receive, because such a person is said not to be a devout supplicant, but, rather, a barker of words.[68]

Minorite Preachers and Prayer

Similar to one presiding at liturgy, the preacher plays a pivotal role in inviting, animating, and directing the community gathered for prayer. The prothemes of the *Sunday Sermons* demonstrate how Bonaventure consciously constructs the identity of Minorite preachers at prayer. The specificity of Bonaventure's project is further demonstrated by a comparison of the extant prothemes of the *Sunday Sermons* with those in other major sermon collections, the *Sermons de tempore*, or *Seasonal Sermons*, and the *Sermons de diversis*, or *Diverse Sermons*, attributed to him by Bougerol.[69] Of the seventeen prothemes among the two hundred and ninety-five sermons in the *Seasonal Sermons*, the only one explicitly referring to the role of preacher and audience is in the *First Sunday of Advent*, which Bonaventure preached to the

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[68] ". . . quia oratio nihil aliud est quam 'ascensus intellectus ad Deum' idcirco, antequam incipias orationem, praepara te ad internam devotionem, si vis attingere ad divinam praegustationem. Nam, teste Gregorio, 'oratio est cordis, non labiorum; nec, inquit, verba deprecantis tantum Deus intendit, sed orantis cor aspicit,' et ideo dicit Sapiens: *Fili, ante orationem praepara animam tuam, et noli esse tanquam homo, qui tentat Deum.* Tunc enim orator dicitur tentare Deum, quando absque ulla cordis praeparatione currit ad vocalem orationem et petit sibi divinam speculationem; sed vix, aut nunquam poterit impetrare, quia talis non dicitur devotus orator, sed potius verborum latrator." *Reg nov* 2.1 (8.476b–477a).

[69] *Sancti Bonaventurae Sermons de diversis*, ed. Jacques Guy Bougerol (Paris, 1993).

Parisian university community gathered at the Dominican convent in Paris, on November 29, 1254 or November 28, 1255.[70] The remaining prothemes are primarily simple invitations to prayer markedly devoid of the elegance and sophistication proper to the *Sunday Sermon* prothemes.[71] While there may have been other prothemes in the original sermons that formed the basis for the *Seasonal Sermons*, it is entirely possible that the copyist chose to see them as unnecessary, and thus eliminated them. The *Diverse Sermons* count thirty-one prothemes among sixty-two sermons. Eight prothemes treat the question of preaching and requisite preparation of those called to proclaim the divine word before inviting the congregation to pray.[72] While the audiences certainly vary widely for the *Diverse Sermons*, these particular prothemes are found in sermons Bonaventure delivered among the Parisian Minorites, such as the *Feast of Saint Stephen the Martyr*,[73] and other sermons elsewhere for similar educated clerics, who more often than not are brothers of the Seraphic Doctor, fellow mendicants like the Preachers, or educated clerics at the University of Paris.[74]

Of all the sermon collections, the *Sunday Sermons* best reveals how Bonaventure carefully constructs the identity and the prayer of the Minorite preacher. His counterpart among the Preachers, Humbert of Romans, believed the protheme served multiple purposes, both practical and spiritual, but Bonaventure's extant prothemes exhibit an exclusive concern with the art and craft of preaching by individuating the subject, that is to say the preacher, together with the community and God as the divine source of the ministry. Whereas

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[70] *Sermo 3*, *Sermons de tempore*, pp. 47–50.

[71] *Sermons de tempore*, p. 27.

[72] In the *Sermons de diversis*, see *Sermo 5*, pp. 119–120; *Sermo 8*, pp. 147–147; *Sermo 35*, pp. 460–461; *Sermo 39*, pp. 517–518; *Sermo 45*, pp. 605; *Sermo 55*, pp. 724; *Sermo 55* Collatio, pp. 728–729; and *Sermo 57*, pp. 749–750.

[73] *Sermo 5*, *Sermons de diversis*, pp. 119–120.

[74] Rubrics for Bonaventure's sermons often offer external evidence indicating the place where he preached and the audience present. For example, the rubric of *Sermo 115* in the *Sermons de tempore* (p. 176), which corresponds to *Sermo 5* in the *Sermons de diversis* on Saint Stephen Martyr reads: "Item in festo beati Stephani protomartyris sermo fratris Bonaventurae editus Parisius in domo fratrum minorum coram universitate." At other times, internal evidence clarifies the context as is the case with *Sermo 39* on The Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the *Sermons de diversis*, pp. 517–530. Bonaventure speaks of purification and the ecclesial hierarchy and ends by referring to perfection manifested in humility, chastity and poverty, the vow of perfection common to religious life.

the word for preacher, *praedicator*, explicitly appears in ten prothemes,[75] others refer to those who as ministers of God speak of or offer something of spiritual significance to the community,[76] bear a sweet yoke and light burden,[77] propose or present the word of God,[78] receive the divine word,[79] examine the Scripture,[80] draw something of divine wisdom,[81] or explain the divine word.[82] As the protheme for the *Fourth Sunday of Advent* depicts through the image of the disciples fishing with Jesus, preaching is indeed a collaborative endeavor requiring both human and divine effort eliciting prayer:

> *Master, we have worked through the night and have taken nothing; but at your word I will lower the net*. Luke 5:5. If the net is the sermon by which people are taken like fish in a net, then the fisher is the preacher whose role is to lower the nets, that is, to compose the sermon, wash the nets, that is, to adorn the sermon, and to restore the nets, that is, to confirm the sermon with authorities: unless God commands with his word that the nets be lowered, preaching is shrouded in darkness by the obscurity of error, which is suggested when it says: *through the night*; it is an onerous burden given the weight of the labor which is noted when it adds: as *worked*; and it is unfruitful work, without benefit, as mentioned when it adds: *we have taken nothing*. Before all else it is necessary to ask God with a prayer so that with his word of grace and piety, he wash the net, that is, our sermon and to ennoble it with clarity of truth by removing the obscurity of error, with the delight of rest by removing the gravity of labor, and with the usefulness of charity by removing unfruitfulness of the works, so that with clear understanding, delighted affections, and beneficial works, we might be able to say some things to the praise and glory, etc.[83]

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[75] *Sermo 2*, n. 1, p. 138*; Sermo 4*, n. 1, p. 156; *Sermo 5*, n. 1, p. 163; *Sermo 6*, n. 1, p. 169; *Sermo 10*, n. 1, p. 199; *Sermo 11*, n. 1, p. 205; *Sermo 14*, n. 1, p. 227; *Sermo 15*, n. 1, p. 234; *Sermo 16*, n. 1, p. 243; *Sermo 18*, n. 1, p. 258; *Sermo 50*, n. 1, p. 473 of the *Sermones dominicales*.

[76] *Sermo 1*, n. 1, p. 131; *Sermo 8*, n. 1, p. 185; *Sermo 9*, n. 1, p. 192; *Sermo 12*, n. 1, p. 212*; Sermo 21*, n. 1, p. 281 of the *Sermones dominicales*.

[77] *Sermo 3*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, p. 148.

[78] *Sermo 13*, n. 1, p. 218; *Sermo 17*, n. 1, p. 252; *Sermo 49*, n. 1, p. 466 of the *Sermones dominicales*.

[79] *Sermo 27*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, p. 320.

[80] *Sermo 7*, *Sermones dominicales*, p. 178.

[81] *Sermo 44*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, p. 433.

[82] *Sermo 47*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, p. 453.

[83] "*Praeceptor, per totam noctem laborantes, nihil cepimus; in verbo autem tuo laxabo rete*, Lucae 5, 5. Si *rete* est praedicatio qua capiuntur homines ut rete pisces, et piscator est praedicator cuius est retia laxare, id est sermones componere, lavare, id est ornare, et reficere, id est auctoritatibus confirmare: nisi praeceptor Deus praecipiat

Given the respective role of the preacher, Bonaventure speaks of prayer as a necessity. The *Sunday Sermons* prothemes indicate the affective interiority common to the Parisian Minorite theology informs the context and content of the requisite prayer which initiates their preaching. More often than not, reference is made to the interior life of the soul by shaping the parameters of the protheme with language reflecting the affective and intellectual dimensions of human spirituality, the powers of the soul, and the crucial role of the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love. This effort is often evident in Bonaventure's frequent tripartite division of the weaknesses confronting both the preacher and audience. Such defects inhibit both the effective delivery and efficacious reception of the word of God, so they are to be acknowledged and, like the ailments plaguing the body, treated. Not to do so would be analogous to ignoring the words of a physician when sick according to the *Fourth Sunday after Epiphany*.[84]

The *Second Sunday of Advent* speaks of a threefold defect in humanity, apparent before the coming of Christ that consists in a weakness of strength, terse comprehension, and darkened understanding. Faced with this situation, those who preach are to pray for the clemency of divine piety that fortifies with strength and promotes effective action, heightens the capacity for comprehension, and clarifies understanding with veracious thought.[85] The *Fourth Sunday of Advent* mentions the obscurity of error, the burden of the preaching endeavor, and the uselessness of labor that is not commanded by the Lord. Preachers are to pray for the clarity of truth, delightful affections associated with rest, and the charity to render work beneficial.[86] In the protheme of the *Third Sunday after Epiphany* based on the verse: *The little ones asked for bread, and there was no one to break it for them*

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ut verbo suo laxentur retia, ipsa praedicatio est tenebrosa per erroris obscuritatem quae tangitur cum dicit: *per totam noctem*; onerosa per laboris gravitatem quae notatur cum subdit: *laborantes*; et infructuosam per operis inutilitatem quae tangitur cum subinfert: *nihil cepimus*. Et ideo ante omnia prece petendus est Dominus ut sua gratia et pietate verbo suo rete, id est sermonem nostrum, lavet et ampliet ad veritatis claritatem, removendo a nobis obscuritatem erroris; ad quietatis suavitatem removendo a nobis gravitatem laboris; et ad caritatis utilitatem removendo a nobis infructuositatem operis, ut tandem clari in intellectu, suaves in affectu et fructuosi in effectu, possimus aliqua dicere ad laudem et gloriam, etc." *Sermo 5, n. 1, Sermones dominicales*, p. 163.

[84] *Sermo 8*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, p. 199.

[85] *Sermo 3*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 148–149.

[86] *Sermo 5*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, p. 163.

(Lamentations 4:4), the Minister General situates the imagined Minorite preacher within the mendicant state common to humanity due to the original fall from grace. Misery envelops men and women ensnared in a threefold state of affliction: weakened by sin and far from the highest majesty, they are unable to act in their indigency; separated from the greatest good, they are unable to make progress; and removed from the highest piety, they encounter cruelty and harshness. To be of use to those gathered in worship, the preacher turns to the font and principle of every blessing, and prays to be fortified for action, open to progress, and rectified in affection.[87]

Bonaventure's tripartite configuration and interest in the interior life of his brothers comes into sharp relief in the penultimate sermon of the *Sunday Sermons*, the *Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost*, where he details the corrosive corruption of the inner person. Commenting on the verse chosen for the protheme, *You will teach me your discipline itself* (Psalm 17:36), the Minister General accentuates the discipline, humility, and zeal religious people require given the spiritual dangers assailing them. The interior life is usually corrupted in three ways congruent to the respective powers of the soul: love for comfort in concupiscent power; vain honor in the irascible power; and sublime truth in the rational power. Integrity or personal wholeness is reestablished when discipline reforms concupiscence by impeding any deviation from the ways of God, the irascible is brought low by curtailing pride, and the rational is illuminated by strenuous labor, undertaken to drive away obscurity. Bonaventure here fashions a petition directed toward the giver of all good gifts, so that reformed in affection, humble in effect, and illuminated in understanding, the words of the sermon might give praise to God, honor the Virgin Mary and please those in attendance.[88] Concerns regarding concupiscence emerge in the last sermon of the *Sunday Sermons*, the *Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost*, where he comments on the verse chosen for the protheme: *How beautiful are your feet in sandals, daughter of the prince* (Canticle of Canticles 7:1). Referring to every religious soul, Bonaventure states one becomes a daughter of the most high prince, Christ, by embracing chastity as an antidote to concupiscence, poverty to counter avarice, and humility in opposition to pride. He concludes

[87] *Sermo 9*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, p. 192.
[88] *Sermo 49*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 465–466.

by asking that the grace and piety of the Lord be at work in the sermon, so as his works would be beautifully honest, his speech be prompt to announce the truth, and his heart filled with charity.[89]

Although the entire collection of prothemes in the *Sunday Sermons* implicitly or explicitly posits human indigency, Bonaventure crafts many with an accent on the gifts God intends to share with those entrusted with the ministry of preaching. His emphasis on interiority carries throughout the threefold structure of petitions addressed to the Father of mercies. The *First Sermon of Advent* sets the stage for a number of subsequent prothemes emphasizing the irascible, affective, and rational powers, which he juxtaposes with the power, goodness, and truth found in the grace preachers seek in prayer as they stand at the threshold of public proclamation. Under the influence of divine grace, they will be fortified in action, gladdened in will, and enlightened in will.[90] The significance of the aforementioned powerful action in the life of the Minorite preacher is exemplified later in two sermons, the *Sunday within the Octave of the Nativity*[91] and the *Fifth Sunday after Epiphany*.[92] The Seraphic Doctor shapes their prothemes around the Old Testament text: *The prophet Elias stood up like a burning fire, and his word burned like a torch* (Sirach 48:1). Both prothemes interpret *Elias stood up* as signifying the summons to an active, conscious withdrawal from secular concerns and pray for it accordingly. They also ask for charity, the *burning fire* that interiorly inflames preachers with love for God and neighbor and for the evangelical truth of the *prophet*, whose *word burned like a torch* to exteriorly illuminate through personal holiness. Bonaventure also binds charity and truth to the expression of sanctity in the initial invocations concluding another protheme doublet based on the Psalm verse: *You, who are seated above the Cherubim, shine forth before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasses* (Psalm 79:2) in the *Third Sunday before Lent*[93] and the *Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost.*[94]

In the *Sunday Sermon* prothemes, there is an underlying emphasis on interior dispositions and personal sanctity but attention is given to the question of eloquence, especially in the case of the passion,

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[89] *Sermo 50*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 473–474.
[90] *Sermo 1*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 131–132.
[91] *Sermo 6*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 169–170.
[92] *Sermo 11*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 204–205.
[93] *Sermo 12*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 211–212.
[94] *Sermo 47*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 452–453.

where divine wisdom dictates humble reverence and profound content be joined to forceful eloquence.[95] According to the protheme for the *Second Sunday of Lent*, Bonaventure's Minorite preacher should speak in a useful manner but briefly as suggested by Francis of Assisi, who reminds his brothers in the *Later Rule* that the Lord "used few words on earth."[96] Bonaventure extols the prayerful longing for the wisdom of God in the *Sunday Sermon* prothemes, not the eloquence of preachers, as he likewise lauds the myriad blessings that flow from this greatest of gifts as most desirable. Commenting on the Epistle of James in the protheme for the *First Sunday of Lent*, Bonaventure reminds preachers that God, who is both generous and pious, bestows wisdom in prayer:

> *If any of you are wanting in wisdom, let that one ask it of God who gives abundantly to everyone, and does not reproach.* James 1:5. Any preacher at the beginning of his sermon should consider the three things understood in the canonical text chosen from blessed Jacob. The first is the indigence of human deficiency, second is the insistence of devout prayers, and the third is the affluence of divine liberality. The indigence of human deficiency is noted, therefore, when it says: *If any of you are wanting in wisdom*; truly the insistence of devout prayers is noted when it adds: *let that one ask it of God*; but the affluence of divine liberality is also noted when it states: *who gives abundantly to everyone.* On that account, most beloved, since we know from experience the indigence of our deficiency and the affluence of divine liberality, let us have recourse with the insistence of devout prayer to God, the Father of lights and the bestower of wisdom, so that with his accustomed piety, God might give us his wisdom so we are able to offer something worthwhile to his praise and the consolation of our souls. Amen.[97]

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[95] *Sermo 14*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, p. 227. See also *Sermo 17*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 252–253.

[96] *Sermo 13*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 218–219. On this admonition and Bonaventure's preaching, see Ray Petry, "Verbum Abbreviatum. St. Bonaventure's Interpretation of the Evangelical Preaching of St. Francis" in vol. 2 of *S. Bonaventura 1274–1974*, ed. Jacques Bougerol (Grotteferrata, 1973), pp. 209–223.

[97] "*Si quis vestrum indiget sapientia, postulet a Deo, qui dat omnibus affluenter et non improperat*, Iacobi 1, 5. Quilibet praedicator in principio sui sermonis, debet haec tria quae in secundo verbo sumpto de canonica beati Iacobi intelliguntur, considerare. Et primum est indigentia humanae defectibilitatis, secundum est instantia devotae precis, tertium est affluentia divinae liberalitatis. Humanae ergo defectibilitatis indigentia notatur, cum dicit: *Si quis indiget sapientia*; devotae vero precis instantia notatur, cum subdit: *postulet a Deo*; sed divinae liberalitatis affluentia notatur, cum subinfert: *qui dat omnibus affluenter*. Idcirco, carisssimi, cum experimentaliter cognoscamus nostrae defectibilitatis indigentiam et divinae liberalitatis affluentiam, recurramus cum devota precum instantia ad Deum Patrem luminum et datorem sapientiae ut sua

Divine Piety and Prothemes

One striking aspect of the prothemes underlining the interiority of prayer is the concern with the image of God, who is invoked as pious. The Bonaventurian corpus, from the *Commentary on John* to the *Collations on the Six Days* suggests a nuanced understanding of piety that includes worship of God as well as mercy for the needy and respect toward authorities. What is remarkable in the *Sunday Sermons* is that ten prothemes refer specifically to God's piety in petitionary prayer; thus, underscoring the interiority of the divine relationship with humanity as the image of God.[98] God as pious, together with other descriptions of the deity as consoling,[99] merciful,[100] generous,[101] and the source of light,[102] further the Parisian Minorite perspective by linking the divine response to prayer with a desired influence on the three powers of the human soul. While piety is a theme Bonaventure admittedly treats on a number of occasions, the image of God as pious is prominent only in the *Sunday Sermons* and not in the other major sermon collections, the *Seasonal Sermons* and *Diverse Sermons*. It is noteworthy that Bonaventure does consider the piety of God in the *Collations on the Seven Gift of the Holy Spirit*, which he preached during Lent at the University of Paris in 1268, since this is the same period in which the Seraphic Doctor may have redacted the *Commentary on Luke* and composed the *Sunday Sermons* to assist Minorite preachers.

The earlier *Commentary on the Sentences* does examines piety in several sections as a human activity vis-à-vis both God and humanity. At the University of Paris, he equates it with, ". . . interior *worship*, which properly pertains to the theological virtues. . . ."[103] and describes it as benevolence toward neighbor accompanied by attention to the

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solita pietate det nobis suam sapientiam, ut possimus proferre in medium ea quae sint ad laudem eius et nostrarum animarum consolationem. Amen." *Sermo 15*, n. 1, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 234–235.

[98] The piety of God is mentioned in the prothemes of *Sermo 3*, p. 148; *Sermo 4*, p. 157; *Sermo 5*, p. 163; *Sermo 9*, p. 192; *Sermo 11*, p. 205; *Sermo 14*, p. 227; *Sermo 15*, p. 234; *Sermo 21*, p. 281; *Sermo 49*, p. 466; and *Sermo 50*, p. 474.

[99] *Sermo 16*, p. 243 and *Sermo 17*, p. 253.

[100] *Sermo 1*, p. 131; *Sermo 6*, p. 169; *Sermo 16*, p. 243; and *Sermo 44*, p. 433.

[101] *Sermo 7*, p. 179 and *Sermo 15*, p. 234.

[102] *Sermo 6*, p. 169; *Sermo 8*, p. 186; *Sermo 15*, p. 234; *Sermo 17*, p. 253; and *Sermo 44*, p. 433.

[103] ". . . cultum *interiorem*, qui proprie spectat ad virtutes theologicas. . . ." *III Sent* d. 9, a. 2, q. 3, concl. (3.218a).

Sacred Scriptures and the memory of Christ's passion.[104] He carefully specifies the gift of piety as benevolence toward those who carry within the image of God, thus distinguishing the gift in the strict sense from interior worship of God and the just obligations of children toward their parents. Worship of God is true wisdom; it begins in faith and culminates in charity. This wisdom is the particular knowledge accorded to piety that moves humanity to manifest benevolence toward the principle and source of creation, offering submission and worship to the God in whose image they are created. Since an earthly father bears the image of the heavenly father in a certain manner, piety is to be offered to parents according to the rule of natural law and necessary obligation. Piety as benevolence and benefit is ultimately due to all human beings, as they are endowed with the divine image. Bonaventure further parses piety by contrasting it with mercy:

> It likewise differs from *mercy*: because mercy toward a neighbor considers conformity in nature and the similitude of the species; *piety* however attends to the image of God in the person. Hence, some say that *mercy* considers suffering in the image, however *piety* considers the image in the one suffering.[105]

Later treatments of piety, particularly in the *Major Life of Saint Francis* and the *Collations on the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, underscore the various nuances found in the *Commentary on the Sentences* and, in similar fashion, accentuate the human expression of piety in regard to God and humanity. At the same time, the articulation of piety as a divine attribute begins to emerge. Bonaventure, who had already identified Francis of Assisi as an exemplar of piety in the *Commentary on the Sentences*[106] due to his celebrated compassion for animals, dedicates the entire eighth chapter of the *Major Life of Saint Francis* to this theme, with the accent on his pious actions towards the poor, suffering, and lost.[107] Permeated with piety, Francis turns to God in devotion and, transformed in Christ by compassion, reaches out to

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[104] *III Sent* d. 35, au, q. 6, concl. (3, 785b–786a). See also *I Sent* d. 46, dub. 5 (1.835b).

[105] "Similiter a *misericordia* differt: quia misericordia in proximo considerat conformitatem in natura et similitudinem speciei; *pietas* vero attendit in homine imaginem Dei. Unde aliqui dixerunt, quod *misericordia* considerat miseriam in imagine, *pietas* vero considerat imaginem in misero." *III Sent* d. 35, au, q. 6, concl. (3.786b).

[106] *III Sent* d. 28, au, q. 1, concl. (3.622b).

[107] *LMj* 8 (8.526a–529b); *FAED* 2, pp. 586–595.

all of creation as one who has returned to original innocence. This mark of universal reconciliation is revealed in the loving concern the Poverello manifests toward humans and animals alike in which he recognized a likeness to Christ.[108] Bonaventure's interest in piety and preaching comes to the fore at the outset of the eighth chapter when speaking of piety and Francis's reverence toward the ministers of God's Word, "He maintained that merciful service of this kind was more acceptable to the *Father of mercies* than all other sacrifices. . . ."[109] These preachers demonstrate true piety through a concern for the conversion of those for whom Christ was crucified. Good example takes precedence over exaggerated eloquence. Those seeking praise of themselves instead of salvation for others, together with preachers who lived in a scandalous manner, however impede the path to truth and are bereft of piety. While a keen emphasis on piety as the heartfelt concern for others is unmistakable in the *Major Life of Saint Francis*, Bonaventure also begins to speak in terms of the piety of God, who as the "Great Almsgiver" gives to all, regardless of merit, out of piety.[110] This nascent articulation of God as pious returns in chapter ten which proposes Francis as the archetype of prayer in order to demonstrate that advancement in God's service is impossible without trusting in divine piety through patient prayer.[111]

As the *Collations on the Seven Gifts of Holy Spirit* reveal, Bonaventure devoted the third evening of his Lenten preaching to the gift of piety. This particular conference, read in conjunction with the prothemes speaking of divine piety, suggests the image of God as pious in the context of preaching took on prominence during Bonaventure's intense academic and pastoral activities in Paris between 1267 and 1268. Returning to the University of Paris to address a community convulsed in controversy,[112] the Seraphic Doctor briefly linked the gift

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[108] While the *Major Life* selectively speaks of the Christological dimension of piety and care for both human beings and animals, the *Minor Life* sees piety exclusively through a Christological lens without mentioning animals. In addition, the *Minor Life* does not integrate the themes of preaching and piety, see *LMn* 3.7 (8.371a); *FAED* 2, p. 697.

[109] "Istiusmodi miserationis officium *Patri misericordiarum* omni sacrificio firmabat acceptius. . . ." *LMj* 8.1 (8.526a); *FAED* 2, p. 587.

[110] *LMj* 7.10 (8.525b); *FAED* 2, p. 583.

[111] *LMj* 10.1 (8.533a); *FAED* 2, p. 605.

[112] San Bonaventura, *Sermoni teologici/2*, intro. Bernardino de Armellada, trans. Pietro Maranesi, Renato Russo, and Attilio Stendardi, and index Jacques Guy Bougerol (Rome, 1995), pp. 7–10.

of piety to the second petition of the Our Father[113] on the second evening. On the third evening he first reiterated his position in the *Commentary on the Sentences*: piety is exercised in divine veneration proper to worship and characterized by wisdom.[114] Worship of God is intrinsic to rational creatures that are drawn to their origin just as a river runs to the sea. Deiform by nature, they return to the Creator through the interior powers of memory, intelligence, and will. Piety then is nothing other than a pious sense, affection, and servitude toward God, the pious, first, and most high origin. Bonaventure then proceeds beyond his previous notions by equating the exercise of piety with the interior sanctification proper to a peaceful and pure conscience and, as such, the summation of the Christian life.[115] To neglect holiness by preferring things of the world instead of virtue and grace is to behave like the foolish person who is more concerned with the condition of his shoe than with the foot. Few indeed preserve the piety of interior holiness; instead, they manifest a hypocritical, exterior sanctity through words, gestures, and conduct.[116] Returning to reiterate the necessity of piety outlined years ago in the *Commentary on the Sentences*, Bonaventure reminds the University community that mercy toward others is the overflowing of internal piety[117] which, unfortunately, is markedly absent in their day.[118] The great patriarchs, from Noah through Abraham, Moses, Joseph, and Samuel to David, exercised unprecedented mercy toward individuals and peoples alike in their day. The Apostle Peter invites Christians to once again practice piety by combining charity and patience when dealing with others, instead of resorting to impatient, angry behavior.

Bonaventure is careful in the *Collations on the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit* to note that piety is predicated on the nature of God.[119] While he had mentioned the piety of God briefly in the *Major Life of Saint Francis*, the erstwhile Parisian professor now dedicates the central section of the third collation to the divine origin of piety. The familiar Minorite theme of spiritual interiority comes to the fore, but here the locus of piety is shifted to within God, as both the liturgy and Scripture attest:

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[113] *De donis* 2.5 (5.463b).
[114] *De donis* 3.5 (5.469a).
[115] *De donis* 3.6 (5.469b).
[116] *De donis* 3.7 (5.469b–470a).
[117] *De donis* 3.8 (5.470a–b).
[118] *De donis* 3.9 (5.470b).
[119] *De donis* 3.11 (5.470b–471a).

> See, I say, that the gift of divine piety first arises from the *uncreated Trinity*, namely from God the Father. While God has all of the most noble of properties, nevertheless God is most excellent in this property, that is, of piety; whence it is said in prayer: 'God, to whom it is proper to always have mercy and spare' etc. And in Sirach: *God is pious and merciful, and forgives sins in the time of tribulation and the protector of all seeking him in truth.—He is pious and merciful* because he spares and protects.[120]

This divine piety is the foundation of nature, grace and glory for, as Bonaventure claims, one who examines all the works of God from beginning to end will find the merciful, divine works of piety are great in nature, greater in grace, and greatest in glory. Presented with this evidence, a response is imperative: "Hear! You are the image of God, and an image is said to be like a copy; therefore, if you are an image of God, you must be configured to God in piety."[121] The fullness of this divine piety, to which humanity is called, also originates in the Incarnate, Crucified Word of God, who embraces human indigence and is celebrated daily in the sacrament of the Eucharist.[122] Through the sacrifice of the Son of God, the Church is called forth and, through the power of the Holy Spirit, sanctified. Piety originates in the Church as well due to the presence of God's Spirit.[123] The members of the Church are one body because they share the same mother, partake in the identical food, and await a common inheritance; consequently, mutual compassion is the rule and should be displayed first by prelates, and then by all.[124] Piety enables every member of the Church to know what is useful for salvation, to avoid what is evil, and to seek after every good.[125]

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[120] "Videte, dico, quod donum pietatis oritur primo a *Trinitate increata*, scilicet a Deo Patre. Quamquam Deus habeat omnes proprietates nobilissimas, excellentissimus tamen est in ista proprietate, scilicet pietatis; unde dicitur in oratione: 'Deus, cui proprium est misereri semper et parcere' etc. Et in Ecclesiastico: *Pius et misericors Deus, et in tempore tribulationis peccata dimittit et protector est omnibus exquirentibus se in veritate.—Pius est misericors*, quia parcit et protegit." *De donis* 3.11 (5.470b–471a). For the liturgical reference, see Gregory the Great, *Liber sacramentorum*, n. 195 in *PL* 78, p. 197. The biblical quote is from Sirach, 2:13.

[121] "Audi! es imago Dei; et imago dicitur quasi imitago: igitur si vere imago Dei, debes te configurare Deo in pietate." *De donis* 3.11 (5.471a).

[122] *De donis* 3.12 (5.471a–b).

[123] *De donis* 3.13 (5.471b).

[124] *De donis* 3.14 (5.472a).

[125] *De donis* 3.16–19 (5.472b–473b).

Conclusion

This essay began by referring to the enduring significance of Bonaventure's sermons for the appreciation of the Minorite ministry of preaching, and by calling attention to the theology of prayer visible in the prothemes in the *Sunday Sermons*. As an author, Bonaventure could undoubtedly envision his literary endeavors, together with his secretary Marco di Montefaltro, as an integral element of his vocation in the Minorite Order. In a study of the written culture of the Minorites, Attilio Bartoli Langeli draws a distinction between them and their mendicant counterparts, the Order of Preachers. Whereas the latter were loath to lose time in activities such as manuscript production and transcription, the former were immersed in the process from start to finish. Legislation pertaining to the Preachers demonstrates their aversion was driven by the belief that scribal activities were detrimental to intellectual and spiritual activities; consequently, requisite books were either purchased outright or copied by scribes outside the community. For their part, the Minorites viewed the acquisition and production of books as an integral part of religious life. Bartoli Langeli notes that the propensity to write originates in the preponderance of scribes in the early fraternity, like Leo, who served as secretary for the relatively prolific Francis.[126]

Bartoli Langeli, following the work of Jacqueline Hamesse, sees in Bonaventure an example of the later Minorite culture, where the author is more involved in the personal and practical process of writing, which shifts the locus of production away from scribes thus heralding an emerging emphasis on the *auctor* as opposed to the *scriptor*.[127] While his exact role in the production of the *Sunday Sermons* is uncertain, Marco di Montefaltro, who according to the Minorite chronicler Salimbene was both fond of Bonaventure and quick to critique his preaching, was instrumental in compiling a series of sermon *reportationes* that may have served as the basis for Bonaventure's sermon project.[128] While Bonaventure does claim credit for the their composition, the degree to which he was involved in the broad

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[126] Attilio Bartoli Langeli, "La cultura scritta dell'Ordine dei Minori" in *Francesco d'Assisi e il primo secolo di storia francescana*, ed. Attilio Bartoli Langeli and Emanuela Prinzivalli (Turin, 1997), pp. 296–297.

[127] Bartoli Langeli, "La cultura scritta dell'Ordine dei Minori," pp. 299–300.

[128] Bougerol, *Sermones dominicales*, pp. 18–19, esp. ns. 32 and 33.

process of production leading to the *Sunday Sermons* remains beyond the scope of this essay. It does, however, demonstrate the Minister General's intention to construct a paradigm of Minorite preaching and prayer, representative of his understanding of clerical ministry in the mid-thirteenth century, throughout the prothemes of the *Sunday Sermons*. As a brother whose experience of the Minorite life was shaped almost exclusively in the environs of the University of Paris, he naturally employs the *sermo modernus* as the model for his fellow preachers with its characteristic protheme and the theological perspectives of fellow Minorites.

Unlike collections such as the *Seasonal Sermons* and *Diverse Sermons*, the seventh Minister General after Francis of Assisi composed the *Sunday Sermons* from beginning to end as unified literary work. This reality rightly presumes a conscious effort to develop themes systematically throughout the text reflecting the intention, insight, and imagination of the author. The prothemes represent an elegantly crafted, biblically based, and theologically sophisticated example of Bonaventure's personal and ideal perception of the Minorite preachers sought for, and supported by, the ecclesial community. Of course he does not write in a vacuum. The concerted efforts of the Parisian Minorites to formulate a theology of prayer distinct from the Order of Preachers, with an emphasis on interiority, provided the content that shapes the prothemes and allows Bonaventure the opportunity to remind the brothers, the *viri spirituales*, of their identity as contemplative preachers. Beggars, truly mendicant before God like all of humanity, they have a precious ministry that is to be animated less by subtle argumentation and eloquence, and more by the charitable compassion and transparent truth interiorly operative in their souls and exteriorly visible in their deeds. This evangelical outreach is but an extension of the piety God has shown to them.

Bonaventure's piety, often termed as care for others, and his belief in the piety of God, are evident in the prothemes of the *Sunday Sermons*, where he repeatedly invites his brothers in ministry to pray with him, so as to invoke divine compassion from the interior depth of the Triune God. This plea for piety confirms and reinforces the Minorite partiality for interiority. Bonaventure's recourse to piety at the height of his ministerial activity is indicative, perhaps, of the growing realization that efforts to guide and reform the Order rest ultimately in the mercy of God. Prayers for piety in the *Sunday Sermons* are then an invitation to God, a request that the Creator look anew

at the divine image within the brothers, and indeed throughout the created cosmos, and respond generously to their needs. While the originating locus of piety is located within the mystery of the most high God, so too, is the Father of mercies asked to encounter others within the soul. There the powers of memory, intelligence, and will manifest the interior signature of the divine and, transformed by divine piety, proclaim the glory of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier in the unmistakable charity, truth, and holiness of Minorite preachers.

CONTEMPLATION AND THE FORMATION OF THE *VIR SPIRITUALIS* IN BONAVENTURE'S *COLLATIONES IN HEXAEMERON*

Jay M. Hammond

In 1273, from Easter (April 9) to Pentecost (May 28),[1] Bonaventure delivered his *Collationes in Hexaemeron* at the Franciscan Convent of Cordeliers at the University of Paris.[2] They are third in a series of *collationes*[3] he delivered at Paris between 1267–1273 and represent his final synthesis.[4] Attacks against the mendicants and the dominance of Averroistic Aristotelianism within the faculty of arts, which was making steady inroads from philosophy into theology, were two controversies within the Parisian intelligentsia that prompted Bonaventure to deliver the conferences.[5] The *Hexaemeron* records such tension: "For there have been attacks on the life of Christ by theologians in morals,[6] and attacks on the doctrine of Christ by the false

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[1] Palémon Glorieux, "La date des Collationes de S. Bonaventure," *Archivum franciscanum historicum* 22 (1929), pp. 257–272, especially 270–272; Jacques Guy Bougerol, *Introduction à Saint Bonaventure* (Paris, 1988), pp. 237–238.

[2] Unless noted, all citations of the *Hexaemeron* are from *S. Bonaventurae opera omnia*, vol. 5, ed. Collegii a S. Bonaventura (Quaracchi, 1889), pp. 327–454, hereafter *Hex*.

[3] Olga Weijers, *Terminologie des universités au XIIIe siècle*, (Lessico Intellettuale Europeo) 39 (Rome, 1987), pp. 374–375, identifies the *Hexaemeron* as belonging to the genre of university sermon on a specific theme. Moreover, when a non-regent master delivered the sermons, as is the case with Bonaventure, the *collatio* resembles a conference rather than an official university act of the *studia generalia*. Thus, these conferences took the form of a series of sermons on a designated topic of great theological import. Also see, Bougerol, *Introduction*, p. 227.

[4] In 1267 Bonaventure delivered the *Collationes de Decem Preceptis*, and in 1268 the *Collationes de Septem Donis Spiritus Sancti*. *Hex* 2.1 and 3.1 (5.336a, 343a) state that the *Hexaemeron* continues the analysis of the *Collationes de Septem Donis Spiritus Sancti*.

[5] Bougerol, *Introduction*, pp. 227–237; Cherubino Bigi, *Studi sul pensiero di S. Bonaventura* (Assisi, 1988), pp. 321–329; Pedro-Amador Barrajón Muñoz, *La Sabiduría Cristiana según San Buenaventura: Un estudio de las Collationes in Hexaëmeron* (Barcelona, 1998), pp. 16–29; Pietro Maranesi, *Verbum inspiratum: Chiave ermeneutica dell'Hexaëmeron di San Bonaventura* (Rome, 1996), pp. 331–344.

[6] A reference to the secular masters who, led by Gerard of Abbeville, were attacking the mendicant ideals proposed by the Franciscan and Dominican orders; see Philippe Grand, "Gérard d'Abbeville et la pauvreté volontaire," in *Études sur l'histoire de la pauvreté*, ed. Michel Mollat (Paris, 1974), pp. 389–409.

positions of the philosophers[7] in the arts."[8] In effect, morals and metaphysics frame the discourse of the collations.[9]

Although the text's context is polemical,[10] its content is primarily pedagogical. It teaches the audience (the intended reader) how to read, not in the grammatical sense,[11] but in the contemplative sense of becoming a better exegete of Scripture in a manner akin to the linked practices of *lectio divina* and *lectio spiritualis*,[12] which was emerging during 12th and 13th centuries, especially within the new mendicant orders.[13] While *lectio divina* provides the scriptural framework for conducting meditative exercises, *lectio spiritualis* offers various methods for interior reflection that mainly deal with the reader's own affective response to a text, especially Scripture. The differentiation between the two developed into a distinction between the intellectual (*intellectus mentis*) and the affective (*affectus mentis*) dimensions of reading[14] that parallel Bonaventure's dual understanding of intellectual and sapiential contemplation,[15] which in turn provide a distinct answer to the dual discourse of metaphysics and morals confronting the Franciscan community at Paris. For Bonaventure, a good exegete

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[7] A reference to the masters at Paris who, led by Siger of Brabant, were promoting Averroistic Aristotelianism, and the related claim that philosophy is self-sufficient without theology/faith/revelation; see Hadrianus Krizovljan, "Controversia doctrinalis inter magistros franciscanos et Sigerum de Brabant," *Collectanea Franciscana* 27 (1957), pp. 121–165.

[8] *Hex* 1.9 (5.330b): "Praecessit enim impugnatio vitae Christi in moribus per theologos, et impugnatio doctrinae Christi per falsas positiones per artistas."

[9] The twofold focus of the discourse—*mores et metaphysica*—parallels the developing twofold character of Franciscan preaching—*exhortatio et praedicatio*—of which Bonaventure is a prime representative; see Bert Roest, *Franciscan Literature of Religious Instruction before the Council of Trent* (Leiden, 2004), pp. 4–6. This twofold polemic also fits the category of the "new theology" that divided theology into two parts: theoretical and practical. See Edward Grant, *God & Reason in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 212.

[10] The disputes were so intense that the University of Paris was closed in the spring of 1273; a fact that Bonaventure mentions in a sermon he delivered in Paris on April 25 in celebration of the Feast of St. Mark, see *De Sancto Marco Evangelista* (9.524a).

[11] Suzanne Reynolds, *Medieval Reading: Grammar, Rhetoric and the Classical Text* (New York, 1996), pp. 7–33.

[12] See Jacques Rousse, Hermann Sieben and André Boland, "Lectio divina et lecture spirituelle," *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, vol. 9 (Paris, 1976), cols. 470–510.

[13] Sieben, "Lectio divina et lecture spirituelle," *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, col. 488.

[14] Sieben, "Lectio divina et lecture spirituelle," *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, col. 487.

[15] Jacques-Guy Bougerol, *Lexique Saint Bonaventure* (Paris, 1969), p. 40, and Ephrem Longpré, "Bonaventure," *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1937), cols. 1767–1843, especially cols. 1796–1798.

must be contemplative, and so the collations teach the brothers how to arrive at proper metaphysics through intellectual contemplation and appropriate morals in sapiential contemplation. Both kinds are necessary because the *vir spiritualis* must possess both understanding and desire within the contemplative ascent.[16]

The *lectio* of both types of contemplation combine into an exegetical method consisting of three interlocking characteristics: reflexive reading, textual community, and subjectivity.[17] Thus, my thesis is threefold: 1) the *Hexaemeron* emerges from, expresses itself in, and primarily explains itself through, the contemplative practice of reflexive reading; 2) the Franciscan textual community at Paris identifies itself by such contemplative reading; and 3) this technique of contemplation forms a subjectivity of desire.[18] In short, reflexive reading is a contemplative activity that forms the brothers' identity by constructing an affective subjectivity. The activity of contemplation brings all three into a unity.

To demonstrate how contemplation operates in the *Hexaemeron*'s introduction (collations 1–3),[19] I first define the terms reflexive reading, textual community and subjectivity. Second, I examine the evidence for a Franciscan textual community at Paris that formed *viri spirituales* via contemplation. Third, I explore the allegorization of

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[16] For discussion of the meaning of *viri spirituales* in Bonaventure's thought see the previous essay by Timothy J. Johnson, "The Prothemes of Bonaventure's *Sermones dominicales* and Minorite Prayer," pp. 99–100, and Bernard McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism* (New York, 1998), pp. 94–95.

[17] As will become evident, I largely base my methodological approach on Brian Stock's research; see, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, N.J., 1983), *Listening for the Text: On the Uses of the Past* (Baltimore, 1990), *Augustine the Reader: Meditation, Self-Knowledge, and the Ethics of Interpretation* (Cambridge, MA, 1996), and *After Augustine: The Meditative Reader and the Text* (Philadelphia, 2001).

[18] While certain reciprocity exists between the formative practice of reflexive reading and the subjectivities of the intended readers within the textual community, the praxis itself is not the primary manifestation of the intended subjectivity; rather the cultivation of desire is the primary manifestation.

[19] A detailed examination of all 23 collations exceeds this paper's parameters. However, reference to their contents will elucidate the interpretive framework Bonaventure provides in the first three collations, which he then employs as he delivers the subsequent conferences. The *Hexaemeron*'s four subsequent visions are: the treatment of science in collations 4–7, faith in 8–12, scripture in 13–19, and contemplation in 20–23. The analysis has largely been limited to the study of the *Hexaemeron*; cross-references to Bonaventure's other works have been kept to a minimum. Likewise, in most cases, space limitations preclude the citation of the Latin along with the reference to the *Hexaemeron*.

scientia according to the contemplation of Christ the center in collation 1. Fourth, I explain the relationship among the four forms of *sapientia* according to the contemplation of Christ's light in the activity of reflexive reading in collation 2. Fifth, I explicate the role of *intellectus* according to the contemplation of the threefold Word in collation 3.[20] I conclude by arguing that the interrelated ideas of reflexivity, textuality, and subjectivity in the *Hexaemeron*'s introduction highlight the importance of understanding medieval interpretive practices, especially the contemplative activity of performative reading.[21]

Defining Terms: Reflexive Reading, Textual Community and Subjectivity

At the outset of his book, *After Augustine: The Meditative Reader and the Text*, Brian Stock writes:

> During late antiquity and the Middle Ages, the spiritual exercises that were associated with self-improvement were normally based on extensive periods of reading and meditation. As a consequence, the reshaping of ethical values in these exercises became a part of the subject's inner experience.[22]

Reflexive reading can simply be described as a form of meditative or contemplative practice, a practice most often applied to reading Scripture.[23] Three characteristics further define such practice. First, reflexive reading involves a text and a reader, which, for lack of better terms, comprise "objective" and "subjective" elements.[24] However, the relation between the two is neither unidirectional nor static. Rather, the interchange transforms both the contemplative reader

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[20] Bonaventure first considers the relationship between *scientia*, *sapientia*, and *intellectus* throughout distinction 35 in book III of his *Sentence Commentary* (3.772a–788b).

[21] Four facts hamper the analysis: the *Hexaemeron* is incomplete, it is a *redactio*, its manuscripts are not uniform, and its reception is not well known. For considerations of these problems see: *S. Bonaventurae opera omnia*, (5:XXXVI–XL); Delorme, *Collationes in Hexaëmeron*, VII–XVIII; Jacques Guy Bougerol, "De la redactio à la reportatio," in *Les genres littéraires dans les sources théologiques et philosophiques médiévales* (Université catholique de Louvain, 1982), pp. 51–52; and Pietro Maranesi, "L'edizione critica Bonaventuriana di Quaracchi," *Doctor Seraphicus* 49 (2002), pp. 36–40.

[22] Stock, *After Augustine*, p. 1.

[23] Stock, *After Augustine*, pp. 15–17, 102–104; *Augustine the Reader*, pp. 1, 9, 18.

[24] Stock, *After Augustine*, p. 37, comments that reflexive reading represents "a mode of thought that saw self and text as self and other."

and the text to such a degree that the distinction between them becomes transparent. As the reader interprets the text, the text reflexively inscribes the reader. Such dialogical praxis constructs a habit of thinking, which constitutes the reader's subjectivity.

Second, the dialogical praxis of reflexive reading involves the creation of a literary intentionality. As the reader works to discern "the verbal intentions of God as expressed in biblical writings," the text's external narrative (object) and the reader's internal narrative (subject) transform into intentional narratives.[25] On the one hand, the contemplative reader becomes the "author" by understanding the author's original intent. On the other hand, the reader also becomes a "text" because the "original authorial intent" of the external written text transforms the reader's own internal intentionality, which constructs both the reader's thinking (intellectual contemplation) and action (sapiential contemplation). In this view, reflexive reading becomes a comparison of the two intentional narratives, and the juxtaposition of those stories opens a "contemplative space" that provides opportunity for clarifying who one should be (future), who one was (past) and who one is (present) as one "addresses the critical problem of how to transform thought into action."[26] Stock calls this a "narrative self."[27] Thus, the reflexivity of contemplative reading is less about the reading of the text, and more about rereading the interpreter as a text.

Third, the literary intentionality of the text-reader interplay relates to the linked practices of *lectio divina* and *lectio spiritualis*.[28] Jean Leclercq describes *lectio divina* as having three parts: the *lectio* or active and audible speaking of the text (Scripture), and the *meditatio*, which "implies thinking of a thing with the intent to do it . . . to practice it," which combine into remembering the text "by heart."[29] Thus, speaking, meditating and reminiscing combine into the one activity of *lectio divina*.[30] Building on Leclercq's work, Brian Stock argues that *lectio spiritualis* became a distinct but linked practice to *lectio divina*.[31]

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[25] Quotation from Stock, *After Augustine*, p. 5; also see p. 19.
[26] Stock, *After Augustine*, pp. 34–35.
[27] Stock, *Augustine the Reader*, pp. 16–17, 269–270.
[28] Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God* (New York, 1982), pp. 15–17, 71–75; Stock, *After Augustine*, pp. 105–114.
[29] Leclerq, *The Love of Learning*, pp. 15–17.
[30] Leclerq, *The Love of Learning*, pp. 72–74.
[31] Stock, *After Augustine*, p. 105.

Three examples explain the difference. First, *lectio divina* requires the presence of a text, the meditation focuses on what was actually read, and the experience creates a situation where silence followed sound. Here the focus is the text itself. In contrast, *lectio spiritualis* does not necessarily require a text, the meditation focuses on the images or emotions that emerge during or after reading, and the experience takes place in silence. Here the focus is the reader's response to the process of "spiritual thinking" itself. Brian Stock summarizes by writing:

> In *lectio divina* the centralizing element in the contemplative process was the biblical text itself. This was the constant reference point for the author's reflections and therefore for his or her conception of literary identity. In *lectio spiritualis* the centralizing element was the thinking subject, who was the source of the continuity of the contemplative process and therefore the source of literary identity.[32]

In effect, *what* the reader interprets, the text of *lectio divina*, reflexively transforms *how* the reader interprets, the thinking subject of *lectio spiritualis*. The reading of the text blurs into the rereading of the contemplative as a text.

Reflexive reading does not only involve an isolated reader and a text because it always involves, either explicitly or implicitly, the existence of a textual community or socialized group of listeners/readers. Brian Stock defines "textual communities" as "microsocieties organized around the common understanding of a script."[33] Whereas reflexive reading focuses on the text-reader relationship, a textual community emphasizes reading as a socializing activity where the intersubjectivity of the listeners/readers emerges from the intertextuality of the community's authoritative writings. There are three basic features of a textual community.[34] First, the community's primary contact with the authoritative text is oral: a text is read. Second, the understanding of the text by an interpreter within the community is an educative process: an interpreter "rereads" the text. Third, the purpose of the interpretation is to historicize the community by giving it a past, which identifies it in the present: the socializing activity of histori-

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[32] Stock, *After Augustine*, p. 108. For similar consideration of meditation and the medieval praxis of reading, see Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (New York, 1990), pp. 156–188.

[33] Stock, *Listening for the Text*, p. 23.

[34] Stock, *Listening for the Text*, pp. 25–26.

cizing internalizes the text. In short, any textual community only needs a text, an interpreter, and a public re-performance.[35] All three together comprise the socialization process of a textual community. Within the process, concepts from the discourse appear as individuals "re-perform" the text, which shape a "collective consciousness" structured by normative textual interpretations.[36] Thus, a textual community is simultaneously an interpretive and socializing event that joins texts, interpretive glosses, and reader response into a single discourse, which shapes the group's intersubjectivity.[37]

The intersubjectivity of the textual community, formed by the normative readings of an authoritative text, both frames and produces the subjectivity of the individual listeners or intended readers. Questions about the interplay of language, history and the constructions of subjectivity are a salient feature of contemporary literary theory. To avoid being sidetracked by the numerous definitions and descriptions of subjectivity, I define the term as: the consciousness of an individual's perceived states, which emerges from and is confined by language.[38] This definition intentionally situates the psychological aspects of subjectivity within a hermeneutical framework, and my perspective on this framework is organizational.[39] Thus, hermeneutical experience constructs an individual self or subjectivity,[40] which is framed by the textual community (textuality) and formed by the contemplative praxis of reflexive reading (reflexivity). An examination of reflexivity, textuality and subjectivity in collations 1–3 will explicate their role in the interpretive process.

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[35] Stock, *Listening for the Text*, p. 37.

[36] Stock, *Listening for the Text*, pp. 13, 108–109.

[37] Stock, *Listening for the Text*, pp. 112, 150.

[38] I formulate my definition upon the analysis of Paul Lakeland, *Postmodernity: Christian Identity in a Fragmented Age* (Minneapolis, 1997), pp. 18–24.

[39] Alan Stroufe, "An Organizational Perspective on the Self," in *The Self in Transition: Infancy to Childhood*, ed. Dante Cicchetti and Marjorie Beeghly (Chicago, 1990), p. 281, describes a subject (self) as "an inner organization of attitudes, feelings, expectations, and meanings, which arises itself from an organized caregiving matrix (a dyadic organization that exists prior to the emergence of the self) and which has organizational significance for ongoing adaptation and experience." I posit the textual community as the "caregiving matrix" that "exists prior to the emergence of the self."

[40] Norbert Wiley, *The Semiotic Self* (Chicago, 1994), pp. 26–39, distinguishes between the self as a semiotic structure and the identity of the subject as the "content" emerging from the semiotic process. While a helpful notional distinction, this paper will consider the two terms—self and subject—as interchangeable.

Four main ideas comprise the *Hexaemeron*'s introduction (collations 1–3): audience, knowledge (*scientia*), wisdom (*sapientia*), and understanding (*intellectus*). All four arise from the *intra* subdivision of Sir 15:5: "In the midst of the Church the Lord will open his mouth and will fill him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding."[41] The audience, to whom one must speak, is the church (1.2–8), or more specifically the brothers and spiritual men (*viri spirituales*) whom God fills (1.9); the approach to science, from where one must begin, is from the center (*medium*), which is Christ (1.10–39); and where one must end is in the spirit of wisdom (2.1–34) and understanding (3.1–32).[42] With the fourfold division, Bonaventure explains how the audience should move from knowledge to wisdom through understanding, all of which is driven by strong desire.

The Audience: A Franciscan Textual Community and the Formation of *Viri Spirituales*

Bonaventure begins by identifying his audience, which he simultaneously describes as the church to whom the Lord speaks. His identification demarcates a textual community: Scripture is the authoritative text, which is first presented orally to the community as *collationes*; Bonaventure is the interpreter who leads the community in an educative/interpretive process; and the audience's public reperformance of the "rereading" internalizes the interpretation of the text, which signifies the socializing activity of the textual community.

Bonaventure begins addressing the audience about the prerequisite qualities for membership in the textual community. It must be a "rational assembly" who: 1) observe the divine law, which enlightens faith and strengthens virtue, 2) adhere to divine peace, which is born from the law's fulfillment in love (*dilectio*), and 3) unite in the consonance of divine praise, which forms, from many affections, one spiritual harmony.[43] The three relationships that Bonaventure posits are significant. The divine law, peace and praise elicit the human

[41] *Hex* 1.1, 2.1, 3.1 (5.329a, 336a, 343a): "In medio Ecclesiae aperiet os eius et adimplebit eum Dominus spiritu sapientiae et intellectus et stola gloriae vestiet illum (Sir 15:5)."

[42] *Hex* 1.1 (5.329a).

[43] *Hex* 1.2–1.5 (5.329a–330a).

responses of faith, virtue, love and affective harmony. These responses are inclusive of the textual community's intersubjectivity, and therefore to the formation of the audience's subjectivity. While divine law, peace and praise frame a subjectivity, the manifestation of that subjectivity appears in the elicited human responses. Nevertheless, reciprocity exists between the divine order and the human order, which Bonaventure will instruct his hearers to cross via the contemplative praxis of reflexive reading.

Along with the characteristics of the textual community, it is important to identify its members. The Delorme edition of the *Hexaemeron* ends with the disclosure that the collations were read "in the presence of some masters and baccalaureates in theology and other brothers of about one hundred and sixty."[44] The numbers indicate an "established" textual community that included at least a threefold membership. The Quaracchi *Hexaemeron* further specifies the members of the textual community and its purpose. Bonaventure addressed the collations to his brothers (*fratres*) and spiritual men (*viri spirituales*), "so that they may be drawn from worldly wisdom to Christian wisdom."[45] Contemplation transforms the brothers into *viri spirituales* as they respond to the dual discourse on morals and metaphysics by "rereading" the worldly wisdom of science according to the Christian wisdom of Scripture. Accordingly, Bonaventure's instruction is preeminently practical: learn how to read.[46]

For the remainder of the introduction, Bonaventure's teaches contemplation's *scientia*, *sapientia*, and *intellectus* to the *viri spirituales* of the Franciscan textual community. So, as proposed in the *intra* subdivision of Sir 15:5, the instruction *begins* with Christ the center in the contemplation of *scientia*; it *ends* with the four forms of *sapientia* in the contemplation of Scripture; and while the *intellectus* of the threefold Word comes last, thereby leading into the six *intellectus* of the *Hexaemeron*'s subsequent visions, it also functions as the contemplative key (*clavis*) that makes the passage from *scientia* to *sapientia* possible.

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[44] The comment appears in the scribe's "epilogue," Delorme, *Hex* (p. 275): ". . . praesentibus aliquibus magistris et baccalariis theologiae et alis fratribus fere centum sexaginta." This brief statement does not provide a ratio between the masters/baccalaureates and the other brothers, nor does it clarify whether the size of the audience remained constant throughout all the *collationes*.

[45] *Hex* 1.9 (5.330b); alternatively, Delorme, *Hex* 1.9 (p. 4), identifies the members as ecclesiastic (*ecclesiastici*) and spiritual (*spirituales*) men.

[46] Hermeneutically speaking; Reynolds, *Medieval Reading*, pp. 45–60.

By doing this, Bonaventure folds all knowledge, wisdom, and understanding into the *triplex Verbum*—God's own self-expression revealed in Christ.

Contemplating Christ the Center and the Allegorization of the Sciences

As General Minister, Bonaventure is sensitive to the critical issue of the intellectual formation of his brothers, and, as a former master at Paris, he is especially drawn to and concerned about the issue.[47] Accordingly, he focuses on three aspects: first, metaphysics begins his ordering and allegorizing of the sciences, which offers his brothers a distinct hermeneutic for interpreting the sciences in preparation for reading Scripture; second, Bonaventure argues for the superiority of deductive over inductive methods of interpretation, which functions as the key theological issue in the *Hexaemeron*'s introduction because it frames how the *viri spirituales* understand the hermeneutical relationship between philosophy/reason and theology/faith;[48] and third, Bonaventure ends his treatment of metaphysics with a concise prayer, which evokes a performative response from the audience so that they can become "true metaphysicians."

First, in ordering the sciences, Bonaventure is simply following the common medieval practice of classifying the sciences.[49] The classification serves the *Hexaemeron*'s purpose of crossing from worldly wisdom to Christian wisdom via contemplation,[50] and Bonaventure pursues that

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[47] Evidenced by his delivery of three conferences to the faculty and students at the Franciscan school at Paris.

[48] Bonaventure had already ordered the sciences in at least three other places: *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* 3.6–7 (5.305b–306a), *De reductione artium ad theologiam* 4 (5.320b–321a), and *Collationes de septem donis Spiritus sancti* 4.1–25 (5.473a–479b), especially 4.9 (5.475a). The *Hexaemeron* again takes up the practice in the collations of the first vision, *Hex* 4–7 (5.349a–368b).

[49] See James Weisheipl, "Classification of the Sciences in Medieval Thought," *Mediaeval Studies* 27 (1965), pp. 54–90, and "The Nature, Scope, and Classification of the Sciences," in *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. David Lindberg (Chicago, 1978), pp. 461–482.

[50] Note the movement is from *sapientia mundana* to *sapientiam christianam*. In effect, Bonaventure posits that *scientia* alone cannot attain wisdom; rather it must be understood according to the light of faith, which makes it "worldly wisdom" that then leads to "Christian wisdom." See Louis Mackey, "Redemptive Subversions: The Christian Discourse of St. Bonaventure," in *The Autonomy of Religious Belief*, ed. Frederick Crosson (Notre Dame, IN: 1981), pp. 137–139. In effect, the Christological

purpose by unambiguously presenting his thesis: "Our intent, therefore, is to show that in Christ are hidden all the treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge, and that he himself is the center of all knowledge."[51] Bonaventure's consideration of Christ as the *medium* of the seven sciences is overtly allegorical. However, he does not allegorize Christ according to the seven sciences, but the sciences according to Christ. Such allegorization functions as a contemplative practice since "it is necessary to begin from [Christ] if someone wishes to reach Christian wisdom."[52] Thus, in speculating the sciences, Bonaventure directs his audience to contemplate Christ because "it is impossible to know a creature except by that through which it was made."[53] Christ, the author of all knowledge, is the singular center of the seven sciences (1.10–39):

Numbers	*Subject*	*Discipline*	*Profession*	*Christ as Center*
12–17	essence	metaphysics	metaphysician	eternal generation
18–20	nature	motion	physical scientist	incarnation
21–24	distance	measurements	mathematician	crucifixion
25–30	doctrine	reason	logician	resurrection
31–33	moderation	ethics	ethicist	ascension
34–36	justice	law	lawyer/politician	final judgment
37–38	concord	theology	theologian	eternal beatitude

Two aspects of the classification are noteworthy. More generally, subdivision of the classification reveals that Bonaventure links theory and praxis together, thereby connecting the classification with the text's twofold discourse of morals and metaphysics.[54] The first three

allegorization is how Bonaventure responds to the problem of incorporating the Aristotelian *libri naturales* into theology; see Weisheipl, "Nature, Scope, and Classification of the Sciences," p. 475.

[51] *Hex* 1.11 (5.331a): "Propositum igitur nostrum est ostendere, quod in Christo sunt omnes thesauri sapientiae et scientiae Dei absconditi (Col 2:3), et ipse est medium omnium scientiarum." Delorme, *Hex* 1.11 (p. 5) emphasizes the role of the Word by connecting Col 2:3 with the earlier reference to Jn 1:1–3: "In hoc Verbo reconditi sunt omnes thesauri sapientiae et scientiae Dei (Col 2:3)." Also see *Hex* 14.30 (5.398a–b).

[52] *Hex* 1.10 (5.330b): "Unde ab illo incipiendum necessario, si quis vult venire ad sapientiam christianam."

[53] *Hex* 1.10 (5.331a): Si ergo ad notitiam creaturae perveniri non potest nisi per id, per quod facta est."

[54] Bonaventure reemphasizes the relationship between theory and praxis in *Hex* 2.3 (5.337a): "Disciplina autem duplex est: scholastica et monastica sive morum; et

"theoretical" sciences relate to metaphysics and concern intellectual contemplation, while the last three "practical" sciences relate to morals and concern sapiential contemplation. Doctrine, reasoned according to the logic of Christ's resurrection, holds the central place. By such classification Bonaventure ties theory/metaphysics and praxis/morals together into a "Christic allegorization" of the sciences,[55] which presents all learning as an "imitation" of Christ because every science reveals the mystery of Christ. The classification functions as an "imitation" because, at the very center of his ordering, Bonaventure reminds his audience that the logic of the cross and resurrection is the "center" of all Christian reasoning,[56] which must be directed toward a singular goal: "Still, to this is all our reasoning, that we may be like God."[57] The ordering of the sciences literally situates the text's twofold discourse as centered in the logic of Christ's crucifixion/resurrection.[58] In effect, the entire classification hinges on the call for similitude with God, the contemplative goal of the *vir spiritualis*.

More specifically, even though the logic of the cross/resurrection holds central place, Bonaventure's initial treatment of metaphysics anchors the entire classification of the sciences.[59] By beginning with the metaphysics of exemplarism, Bonaventure opposes the prevalent practice of classification at the University of Paris, which placed metaphysics as the "last science to be studied."[60] His re-ordering is significant. Since metaphysics concerns "first principles," it should

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non sufficit ad habendam sapientiam scholastica sine monastica; quia non audiendo solum, sed observando fit homo sapiens."

[55] Bonaventure allegorizes the sciences; he does not allegorize Christ; Mackey, "Redemptive Subversions," p. 138.

[56] *Hex* 1.28 (5.334a).

[57] *Hex* 1.30 (5.334b): "Tamen ad hoc est tota ratiocinatio nostra, ut simus similes Deo."

[58] *Hex* 1.30 (5.334b).

[59] Paucity of space allows analysis only of metaphysics in Bonaventure's allegorizing of the sciences. For a broader investigation of Bonaventure's classification, see Alexander Gerken, *Theologie des Wortes: Das Verhältnis von Schöpfung und Inkarnation bei Bonaventura* (Düsseldorf, 1963), pp. 335–351; Vincenzo Cherubino Bigi, "Il Cristocentrismo nelle Collationes in Hexaemeron," in *Studi sul pensiero di San Bonaventura* (Assisi, 1988), pp. 329–345; Muñoz, *La sabiduría Cristiana*, pp. 88–90 and 97–108; and Hayes, *The Hidden Center*, pp. 198–204.

[60] Weisheipl, "Classification of the Sciences," 85; also see 86 and 89, which again identify metaphysics as the last science. In placing metaphysics last, the rising trend at Paris was following the lead of Aristotle who placed metaphysics last; see Weisheipl, "The Nature, Scope, and Classification of the Sciences," pp. 467–468.

come first, not last, because first principles define the interpretive framework according to which the investigations of the sciences transpire. Although the errors he finds within Aristotle's metaphysics troubles Bonaventure, he is more vexed by the issue of where metaphysics occurs in the order of learning.[61] Its placement greatly impacts the entire interpretive process: where one begins frames how one will interpret and understand the sciences, and how the *vir spiritualis* understands the sciences will impact contemplation because contemplation concerns "first principles."

Without naming his adversaries, Bonaventure's re-ordering counters the methodology of ending with "first principles," which seems to assume that such an interpretive process is not laden with metaphysical presuppositions. Thus, the ontological, metaphysical, and epistemological claims expressed within Bonaventure's classification must not be separated from the general hermeneutical premises he advocates to the textual community regarding their specific exegetical method. In short, the collations inextricably engage hermeneutical issues, and it is this concern that primarily attracts Bonaventure's attention because the "first principles" of metaphysics are the formal object of contemplation.

Second, Bonaventure identifies interpretation as the key theological issue of his day. The usual culprits for arousing Bonaventure's series of collations are the philosophical claims supporting the eternity of the world, the unity of the agent intellect, and ethical determinism.[62] These three certainly disturb him, but they are secondary to his core concern: how should the brothers interpret, deductively (reasoning from universal to particular or from cause to effect) or inductively (reasoning from particular to universal or from effect to cause). Behind the Parisian controversy over double truth[63] is the question of which hermeneutical method is superior, deductive science or inductive science. Thus, Bonaventure's argument is not simply over rivaling philosophical truth claims that impact theology, but concerns the legitimacy of the entire interpretive process itself.

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[61] For a consideration of this question without reference to Bonaventure, see Weisheipl, "The Nature, Scope, and Classification," pp. 475–476.

[62] *Hex* 6.1–5 (5.360a–61b), succinctly summarized in 7.1 (5.365a).

[63] Bonaventure rejects the notion of double truth; see Jean-Pierre Müller, "Saint Bonaventure a-t-il admis la possibilité d'une double vérité?" in *San Bonaventura maestro di vita francescana e di sapienza cristiana*, 1 (Rome, 1976), pp. 481–494.

The imagery Bonaventure employs illustrates the seriousness of his concern. To make his point, he juxtaposes the two powerful symbols of the tree of life and the tree of knowledge (Gn 2:9, 17). As the tree of life,[64] Christ, who is the exemplar, teaches deductively.[65] In contrast:

> If, however, we stray to the knowledge of things in experience, investigating them more than is conceded us, we fall from true contemplation and taste of the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil, as did Lucifer. For if Lucifer, contemplating this truth [the Word], had been led back from the knowledge of creatures to the unity of the Father, he would have made dusk into dawn and enjoyed the daylight. But because he fell into the pleasure and desire of superiority, he lost the day. Adam did the same.[66]

The symbolism is strong: the philosophers mimic Lucifer[67] because they stoop to the knowledge of things in experience by interpreting inductively. The philosophers' methodological approach misleads them into the general error of falling in love with created beauty, which leads to death,[68] and the specific error of believing in an eternal world, which leads to darkness.[69] In effect, strict inductive reasoning destroys contemplation.

Such "errors" make Bonaventure highly suspicious of the rising influence of the inductive method, which begins with observed phenomena and operates according to empirical logic and dialectical analysis.[70] In contrast, he favors a deductive method rooted in the

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[64] *Hex* 1.17 (5.332a), 14.18, 30 (5.396a–b, 398a–b), 16.22 (5.406b), 18.3 (5.415a). Notably, the unfinished *Hexaemeron* ends with the tree of life in 23.31 (5.449b).

[65] *Hex* 1.14 (5.332b); also see *Hex* 1.17 (5.332a–b).

[66] *Hex* 1.17 (5.332a): "Si vero declinamus ad notitiam rerum in experientia, investigantes amplius, quam nobis conceditur; cadimus a vera contemplatione et gustamus de lingo vetito scientiae boni et mali, sicut fecit lucifer. Si enim lucifer, contemplando illam veritatem, de notitia creaturae reductus fuisset ad Patris unitatem; fecisset de vespere mane diemque habuisset; sed quia cecidit in delectationem et appetitum excellentiae, diem amisit. Sic Adam similiter." Bonaventure repeatedly employs the image of the two trees of the garden to juxtapose the contemplative who has faith against the curious seeker of knowledge. See *Hex* 3.27 (5.347b), 14.17–18 (5.396a–b), 16.22 (5.406b), 17.27 (5.413b), 18.3 (5.415a), 19.4 (5.420b); also see *Hex* 18.1 (5.415a), 19.18 (5.423a), Delorme, *Hex* 4.7.1 (p. 213), Muñoz, *La Sabiduría Cristiana*, pp. 77–83, and Joseph Ratzinger, *The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure*, trans. Zachary Hayes (Chicago, 1989), pp. 151–154.

[67] *Hex* 4.1 (5.349a) makes the identification explicit.

[68] *Hex* 1.17 (5.332a).

[69] *Hex* 1.16 (5.332a).

[70] Grant, *God & Reason in the Middle Ages*, pp. 160–164.

Word's exemplarism that is revealed in Scripture and clarified via allegorical exegesis and the logic of analogy. Through powerful symbolism, Bonaventure warns his audience about the shift from deductive to inductive reasoning, which was bringing an ever-increasing rationalization of theology,[71] and the growing dominance of natural philosophy over theology.[72] Bonaventure's sharp criticisms against his opponents' metaphysical claims, springs from his unease with this hermeneutical shift that was rapidly altering the theological methods of his day. This is no trivial matter because Bonaventure lucidly realizes that how his brothers read a text (deductively or inductively) will largely determine what a text means.

There is also a distinct spatial perspective to Bonaventure's consideration of deductive versus inductive reasoning. On the one hand, quoting Augustine "Christ having a chair in heaven teaches inwardly."[73] On the other, quoting Aristotle, contradiction of eternal rules is only possible through "external reason."[74] Such spatiality conveys an affinity for an epistemology of illumination[75] predicated upon an *a priori* metaphysics, which, at least in Bonaventure's case, assumes a hermeneutical stance that prefers deductive over inductive reasoning.

Third, lockstep with his preference for deductive reasoning, Bonaventure teaches a metaphysics of exemplarism grounded in his theology of the Trinity,[76] according to which reason finds certitude.[77] So although he states, "the beginning is from the center, that is, from Christ," the backdrop to his Christic allegorization of the sciences is his theology of the Trinitarian mystery. Bonaventure is direct on this point: metaphysics is first "by reason of eternal generation"[78] of

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[71] Grant, *God & Reason in the Middle Ages*, p. 211.

[72] Grant, *God & Reason in the Middle Ages*, pp. 264–268.

[73] *Hex* 1.13 (5.331b): "Christus habens cathedram in caelo docet interius." Also see *Hex* 12.5 (5.385a–b).

[74] *Hex* 2.10 (5.338a): "Sic enim certae sunt, ut nullo modo sit eis contradicere nisi ad exterius-rationem."

[75] John Quinn, *The Historical Constitution of St. Bonaventure's Philosophy* (Toronto, 1973), pp. 526–551, 560–572, and 745–746; also see Léon Veuthey, *La filosofia cristiana di San Bonaventura* (Rome, 1996), pp. 67–70 and 77–79.

[76] On the centrality of exemplarism in Bonaventure's thought see: Zachary Hayes, "Bonaventure: Mystery of the Triune God," in *The History of Franciscan Theology*, ed. Kenan Osborne (St. Bonaventure, NY, 1994), pp. 51–56 and 72–79.

[77] Quinn, *The Historical Constitution of St. Bonaventure's Philosophy*, pp. 448–460, 735–739.

[78] *Hex* 1.12 (5.331a): "Primum ergo medium est essentiae aeternali generatione primarium."

the Son from the Father, which is the ontological basis for his exemplarism. While the philosopher, through reason, can arrive at the notion of Being (*esse*), which has a beginning, a middle and an end, that is, efficient, exemplar and final causality,[79] reason alone cannot penetrate the mystery of the Trinity, which can only be revealed in faith.[80] Nevertheless, exemplarity is central to philosophical metaphysics because no philosophical science coincides with it. While metaphysics harmonizes with physics in its concern for the origin of things, and it harmonizes with ethics in its concern for the end of things, metaphysics is most properly metaphysics when it concerns Being according to its exemplarity, which reduces all multiplicity to the unity of one divine essence, the *primum principium*.[81] Bonaventure states: "But when he considers this being in relation to the exemplar of all things, he communicates with no other science and is a true metaphysician."[82] Conversely, without exemplarity, one cannot be a true metaphysician.

Simply stated, Bonaventure teaches that exemplarism is the most basic metaphysical question upon which he hinges the dual discourse of metaphysics (origin) and morals (end). Bonaventure's unique answer translates the philosophical metaphysics of triple causality into his theological metaphysics of Christ's exemplarity.[83] Hence, Christ, as the Father's Art, is the center of all truth, and since everything exists through the Word, everything must be known in the Word because "the principle of being and knowing is the same."[84] Bonaventure Christianizes this scholastic axiom to hammer home to his audience

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[79] For Bonaventure, efficient causality is primarily the concern of natural philosophy, exemplar causality is primarily the concern of rational philosophy, and final causality is primarily the concern of moral philosophy; see *Hex* 1.13 (5.331b).

[80] *Hex* 1.13 (5.331b).

[81] J.A. Wayne Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order in Bonaventure's Theology* (St. Bonaventure, 2001), pp. 10–13 and 66–69.

[82] *Hex* 1.13 (5.331b): "Sed ut considerat illud esse in ratione omnia exemplantis, cum nullo communicat et verus est metaphysicus."

[83] With the threefold Word of Collation 3, Bonaventure's doctrine of exemplarism receives its fullest expression. The section "Contemplating the Threefold Word as the Key to All Understanding" below examines the *triplex Verbum*. On Christ's exemplarism, see Hayes, "Christology and Metaphysics in the Thought of Bonaventure," in *Celebrating the Medieval Heritage: A Colloquy on the Thought of Aquinas and Bonaventure*, ed. David Tracy, *The Journal of Religion, Supplement* 58 (1978): S85–S104, especially S87–S91.

[84] *Hex* 1.13 (5.331b): "Nam idem est principium essendi et cognoscendi." In just a few sentences, Bonaventure collapses ontology, metaphysics and epistemology into Christ's exemplarity.

that only by contemplating the center can the *vir spiritualis* discern the origin and completion of all things.[85] Bonaventure summarizes with a prayer:[86]

> So let everyone say: 'Lord, I came from you most high, I come to you most high, and through you most high.' This is the metaphysical center that leads us back, and this is the whole of our metaphysics: emanation, exemplarity, and consummation, that is, to be illumined by spiritual rays and to be led back to the most high. And in this way, you will be a true metaphysician.[87]

This *locus classicus* is often cited to explain Bonaventure's theological vision. However, it is often overlooked that he prefaces his own summation with a prayer: "Lord, I came from you most high, I come to you most high and through you most high."[88] The prayer implies a performance, which attempts to enact the program it seeks to describe: contemplative receptivity to Christ's mediation, which returns everything to the Father in the unity of the Spirit. So just as there can be no true metaphysics without exemplarity, Bonaventure simply assumes, without elaboration, that one cannot be a true metaphysician without prayer.[89] For it is in prayer that theory and praxis unite and so it is to prayer that Bonaventure leads the *viri spirituales* as they navigate the twofold discourse of morals and metaphysics via intellectual and sapiential contemplation.

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[85] *Hex* 1.13 (5.331b).

[86] Jn 16:28 immediately precedes the quoted citation: "I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again I leave the world and go to the Father." In effect, Bonaventure's prayer is an imitation of Christ and his understanding of a "true metaphysician" is one who not only retains correct knowledge, but enacts that understanding in a re-performance of Christ's own *exitus/egressio* and *reditus/regressio/reductio* of all things and all relationships to God who is the *primum*.

[87] *Hex* 1.17 (5.332b): "Sic dicat quilibet: Domine, exivi a te summo, venio ad te summum et per te summum. Hoc est medium metaphysicum reducens, et haec est tota nostra metaphysica: de emanatione, de exemplaritate, de consummatione, scilicet illuminari per radios spirituales et reduci ad summum. Et sic eris verus metaphysicus."

[88] Bougerol does not overlook the importance of this brief prayer, and identifies it as constitutive of Bonaventure's *métaphysique chrétienne*; see *Introduction*, pp. 238.

[89] One reason that Bonaventure insists on prayer is that he had already stated that the truth of Christ's eternal generation "is perceptible to the mind alone" [*Hex* 1.14 (5.332a): "Haec est ergo veritas sola mente perceptibilis . . .]"; thus, without the illumination of prayer, one can neither know nor experience the source of all truth because it requires an assent of faith. Specifically, in his consideration of the seventh center in *Hex* 1.37 (5.335b), Bonaventure claims that a theologian works for peace by considering how God created the world, but more principally how it can be returned to God through faith.

Evidence from the first collation indicates that Bonaventure, in a context of rapid change, is quite anxious about the interpretive method of the Franciscan textual community at Paris. In response to the perceived errors of certain philosophical claims, he: 1) teaches the brothers a hermeneutic that roots the entire interpretive process in the metaphysics of Christ's exemplarism; 2) he favors a deductive theological method over the inductive methods of natural philosophy; and 3) he merges both into prayer, which adds a performative, even imitative dimension to the interpretive process taught in the inaugural collation. Through metaphysics, deduction and prayer, Bonaventure instructs his brothers how to read according to the *medium* because how they understand the *medium* constructs what they know about reality. Bonaventure's metaphysical framework rejects double truth because Christ is the *medium* of all knowledge. This hermeneutical claim, expressed in Christocentric exemplarism, forms the medium through and in which all *intellectus* transpires. In effect, Bonaventure boldly identifies his hermeneutic bias and invites his fellow *viri spirituales* to contemplate it in prayer: *medium est intellectus*, or to use a modern idiom, the medium is the message. The *medium* teaches the textual community how to read *scientia*, which is crucial because how the exegete interprets the sciences greatly impacts how the contemplative exegetes the message of Scripture.

Contemplating Wisdom's Four Forms and the Praxis of Reflexive Reading

While the Christological *medium* of collation 1 provides the Parisian textual community with a contemplative allegorization of worldly *scientia*, the Christian *sapientia* of collation 2, revealed by Christ's light,[90] transitions to the reflexive activity of reading Scripture.[91] The practice has at least three aspects. First, wisdom begins and ends with desire, which intends an affective subjectivity; second, the four forms of wisdom,[92] represent a text-reader interplay that involves the reader

[90] *Hex* 2.8 (5.337b).

[91] The imagery is subtle and simple, but powerful nonetheless: just as one can not literally read in the dark, reality cannot be read without Christ's light. This metaphor would have had particular relevance for professors and students who spend so much time reading.

[92] The most in-depth study of the concept of wisdom in the *Hexaemeron* is Muñoz, *La Sabiduría Cristiana según San Buenaventura*; chapter 4 considers the four forms of wisdom specifically, pp. 195–263.

interpreting Scripture according to the first two forms of *uniform* and *multiform* wisdom, which in turn, reflexively inscribe the reader's intentionality according to the second two forms of *omniform* and *nulliform* wisdom; and third, the dialogical praxis of the four forms mimics the linked practices of *lectio divina* and *lectio spiritualis*. In short, the reflexive exercise of the four forms cultivates a habit of thinking that shapes an affective subjectivity through its contemplative performance.

First, desire initiates the contemplative quest for wisdom: "The door to wisdom is a yearning and vehement desire for it."[93] Yet, desire does not necessarily lead the *vir spiritualis* directly to wisdom. Rather, justice, discipline, love, and sanctity shape and direct desire towards its final goal of receiving wisdom from God. Justice is the initial step towards wisdom,[94] because its observance engenders wisdom.[95] A desire for discipline follows,[96] which is twofold: scholastic and monastic.[97] With the division, Bonaventure again briefly takes up the matter of joining theory and praxis together, and lectures that wisdom requires both: "And scholastic [discipline] without monastic is insufficient for having wisdom because a person does not become wise by only hearing, but by observing."[98] To make his point, Bonaventure, quoting Aristotle, uses the example of a sick person who is only healed by observing the physician's prescription.[99] Knowledge must be accompanied by performance if one is to reach wisdom, but Bonaventure warns that inattention to discipline's practical dimension results in few who actually reach true wisdom.[100] True contemplation requires both knowledge and desire.

Next, the desire for discipline begets love, specifically a love that keeps God's laws.[101] However, such love is not merely speculative;

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[93] *Hex* 2.2 (5.336a): "Porta sapientiae est concupiscentia eius et vehemens desiderium." Bonaventure's consideration of wisdom includes four points: its origin, house, door and form. However, the first two points were covered earlier in the *Collationes de septem donis Spiritus sancti*, which treats wisdom's origin in 1.1–18 (5.457a–461b) and its house in 9.1–17 (5.499a–503b). Thus, the *Hexaemeron* begins with consideration of wisdom's door. See Muñoz, *La Sabiduría Cristiana*, p. 191.

[94] *Hex* 2.2 (5.336b).

[95] *Hex* 2.2 (5.336b).

[96] *Hex* 2.3 (5.337a).

[97] *Hex* 2.3 (5.337a).

[98] *Hex* 2.3 (5.337a): "Et non sufficit ad habendam sapientiam scholastica sine monastica; quia non audiendo solum, sed observando fit homo sapiens." Also see *Hex* 6.19 (5.363a).

[99] *Hex* 2.3 (5.337a). Also see *Hex* 7.10–11 (5.367a).

[100] *Hex* 2.3 (5.337a).

[101] *Hex* 2.4 (5.337a).

rather, Bonaventure reiterates a theory/praxis symbiosis by remarking that observing God's laws requires the practical activity of doing the good of charity. Such activity sanctifies: "when you keep the law, you are sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit. And then you will be drawn away from any love that is not God."[102] Sanctity draws away from corrupted love and makes one *deiform*,[103] which is the formal end of all wisdom,[104] and the contemplative goal of the *vir spiritualis*. Wisdom can never be attained through learning alone, rather, Bonaventure emphasizes that wisdom is impossible without sanctity, and recapitulates his argument by returning to his opening statement: "Sanctity is the immediate disposition toward wisdom. Therefore, the door to wisdom is a yearning and vehement desire."[105] Having brought his point full circle, Bonaventure ends with two parting remarks. Only the contemplative who pleads and prays for wisdom receives it by loving and desiring wisdom above all else as the highest and universal good.[106] Reciprocally, if one hesitates to love and desire wisdom above all else that person is not disciplined and does not enter the door of wisdom, which lifts one from the world by extinguishing all other desires.[107] Such desire, disciplined by pleading and prayer, juxtaposes the contemplative with the aforementioned philosophers who love created beauty and whose mere curiosity lacks devotion.[108]

The contemplative quest for wisdom also ends in desire. *Nulliform* wisdom signifies the highest state of Christian wisdom,[109] and desire/love is its defining characteristic: "And at the summit there is the union of love, and this transcends everything."[110] The supreme union of love transcends every understanding and every knowledge.[111] Again,

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[102] *Hex* 2.4 (5.337a): "Quando autem custodis legem, sanctificaris et efficeris plenus Spiritu sancto; et tunc abstraheris ab omni amore, qui non est Deus."

[103] *Hex* 2.5 (5.337a).

[104] *Hex* 2.6 (5.337ab).

[105] *Hex* 2.6 (5.337a): "Sanctitas immediata dispositio est ad sapientiam: ergo concupiscentia et vehemens desiderium porta est sapientiae."

[106] *Hex* 2.6 (5.337b).

[107] *Hex* 2.6 (5.337b).

[108] See *Hex* 1.8 and 1.17 (5.330b, 332a).

[109] *Hex* 2.29 (5.341a).

[110] *Hex* 2.29 (5.341a): "Et in vertice est unitio amoris, et haec omnes transcendit." Delorme, *Hex* 2.30 (p. 30) reads: "Ad hanc autem experientiam non pervenitur nisi per amorem maximum."

[111] *Hex* 2.30 (5.341a).

prayer is key because Bonaventure, citing Pseudo-Dionysius, claims that the summit of love can only be reached through prayer, which arouses the affections and quiets the intellect.[112] In such prayer, only the affective power remains active.[113] Everything else is stripped away, even to the point of mystical death,[114] which imitates Christ's own death.[115] Although Bonaventure reminds his audience that only very few reach such a state of affective ecstasy,[116] he nevertheless rouses his listeners to strive for its experience: "It is not within our power to possess this fire; but if God gives it from above, it is the priest's duty to feed and throw on wood by means of prayer."[117] The ardent prayer Bonaventure proposes involves a process of intellectual negation,[118] whereby the contemplative's affective intentionality is left exposed to the Spirit's love, which paradoxically blinds while illuminating, brings death while giving life, and perfectly unites while maintaining real distinction.

Further consideration of *nulliform* wisdom will come in the next section.[119] What is noteworthy here is that desire is both the root and fruit of wisdom. As Bonaventure envelopes wisdom in desire, he also repeatedly mentions prayer as integral to the cultivation of desire. In a way, while desire serves as the door to wisdom, prayer acts as the catalyst of that desire, which leads to union with God in love. In effect, the text-reader dynamic of wisdom's four forms inextricably involves the formation of an affective subjectivity.

Second, the four forms of wisdom represent a program of reading that teaches a reader how to interpret Scripture according to the first two forms of *uniform* (9–10) and *multiform* (11–19) wisdom,

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[112] *Hex* 2.32 (5.342b).

[113] *Hex* 2.30 (5.341b). On the meaning and role of *affectus* in Bonaventure's thought, see Franz Sirovic, *Der Begriff Affectus und die Willenslehre beim hl. Bonaventura: Eine analytisch synthetische Untersuchung* (Vienna, 1965), especially pp. 79–94.

[114] *Hex* 2.31 (5.341b).

[115] *Hex* 2.34 (5.342b).

[116] *Hex* 2.30 (5.341b).

[117] *Hex* 2.32 (5.342b): "Hunc ignem non est in potestate nostra habere; sed si Deus dat desuper, sacerdotis est nutrire et ligna subiicere per orationem." Both the Quaracchi and Delorme editions contain the identification of *sacerdos*, which provides a further hint of the audience's composition. It seems that Bonaventure is primarily addressing priests (or those training to be priests), not lay brothers.

[118] *Hex* 2.30 (5.341b): "Haec autem contemplatio fit per gratiam, et tamen iuvat industria, scilicet ut separet se ab omni eo, quod Deus non est, et a se ipso, si possibile esset. Et haec est suprema unitio per amorem."

[119] See endnote 167 and related text.

which reflexively interpret the reader's cognition and volition according to the second two forms of *omniform* (20–27) and *nulliform* (28–34) wisdom. However, the interpretive process is not linear, but cyclic, because Scripture's narrative absorbs the reader's subsequent interpretations of the text, the self, and the world. In other words, investing in Scripture's narrative transforms how the reader interprets because Scripture's intentional narrative reflexively constructs the exegete's "narrative self" according to a worldview defined by Scripture. Thus, the four forms of wisdom are less about exegesis of the text, and more about rereading/reforming/reconstructing the exegete's "intentional narrative." Such transformation is elemental to contemplative praxis.

Three elements regarding the reflexive process stage the subsequent analysis of wisdom's four forms.[120] 1) *Sapientia uniformis* is that form of wisdom proper to philosophy. It concerns the "rules of divine law" that define the principles of reason, which come from God and lead back to God. In contrast, *sapientia multiformis* is that form of wisdom proper to theology. It concerns the "mysteries of divine Scriptures" that contain the truths of revelation, which come from the three spiritual senses of allegory, anagogy, and tropology. *Sapientia omniformis* is that form of wisdom that is cataphatic. It concerns the "vestiges of the divine works" that manifest an intelligible sign-system, which reflects God's presence throughout all creation. In contrast, s*apientia nulliformis* is that form of wisdom that is apophatic. It concerns "the elevations of divine ecstasy" that enter hidden mysteries, which God reveals through the Spirit. On the "side" of the text, *uniform* wisdom prepares the exegete for reading Scripture's literal sense, and *multiform* wisdom supersedes with Scripture's spiritual senses. On the "side" of the reader, *omniform* wisdom conditions the exegete's intellect to perceive God's Trinitarian presence in all created things, and *nulliform* wisdom supersedes with negation, which conditions the exegete's will to receive God's transforming love.[121] The crux of the reflexive praxis between text-reader is the transition from *multiform* to *omniform* wisdom because Scripture makes creation's sign-system, obscured

[120] *Hex* 2.8 (5.337b).

[121] The text's reflexive inscribing upon the reader's intellect/cognition and will/volition represent essential characteristics of Franciscan theology/spirituality: the world's sacramentality and the primacy of the will.

and made unintelligible by sin, legible again.[122] In other words, the text-reader reflexivity is reformative, which is the primary goal of theology.[123]

2) The reflexivity between *multiform* and *omniform* wisdom simultaneously addresses the literalism of both the Jews and philosophers, which are contrary to Christ's wisdom.[124] Against medieval Jewish exegetes, Bonaventure upholds allegory thereby placing figurative meaning in logical priority over literal meaning.[125] Against the Averroistic philosophers, he endorses analogy, which again favors symbolic meaning over literal meaning.[126] Thus, via allegory and analogy, Bonaventure teaches the *vir spiritualis* to read in a manner that undercuts what he perceives to be the strict literalism of the Jews and the strict rationalism of the philosophers. Both errors end in the same place: the rejection of faith.[127] To make his point, Bonaventure employs the symbol of the Exodus from Egypt to depict the follies of both.[128] The Jewish exegetes, who adhere to the literal sense alone, lack faith and therefore want to return to slavery in Egypt.[129] While the philosophers, representing pharaoh's magicians, want to perform miracles, but lack faith, and so are unable to deliver.[130]

3) The dual lack of faith and its resulting errors must be overcome by faith in Christ. Just as Christ the center provided an allegorical

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[122] *Hex* 12.14–17 (5.386b–387b), and 13.12–13 (5.389b–390a); see Muñoz, *La Sabiduría Cristiana*, pp. 230–233.

[123] *Hex* 1.37–38 (5.335b), 13.17 (5.390b): "Intendit enim Scriptura reducere ad originale principium per reformationem."

[124] *Hex* 2.7 (5.337b).

[125] *Hex* 3.16 (5.346a), 8.7 (5.370b), 16.22–23 (5.406b–407a), 19.7–9, 18 (5.421a–b, 423a), 20.15 (5.428a); also see Pietro Maranesi, "Littera et Spiritus: I due principi esegetici di san Bonaventura," *Collectanea Franciscana* 66 (1996), pp. 97–124.

[126] *Hex* 4.1, 8–13 (5. 349a, 350a–351b), 5.21–22 (5.357b), 6.1–2, 9 (5. 360a–361a, 362a), 12.17 (5.387a–b), 17.25–28 (5.413a–414b), 18.3 (5.415a).

[127] Allegory and analogy require faith. The requirement of faith is a persistent theme throughout the *Hexaemeron*, especially collations 5.1–12.22 (5.353a–368b). *Hex* 3.4 (5.343b) from the introduction alone demonstrates the emphasis.

[128] *Hex* 1.9 (5.330b), 2.7 (5.337b), 4.1 (5.349a), 12.17 (5.387a–b), and 19.12, 18 (5.422a, 423a). The imagery of returning to Egypt is from Augustine; see *De doctrina christiana* 2.41.62–2.42.63 where he compares the knowledge gathered from the Egyptians to knowledge gained from Scripture.

[129] *Hex* 2.7 (5.337b), footnote 125, and *Hex* 8.7 (5.370b). Also see *Hex* 3.16 (5.346a).

[130] *Hex* 2.30 (5.341b) and 9.18 (5.375a); also see *Hex* 4.1 (5.349a), 12.16 (5.387a) and 19.12 (5.422a).

corrective to the errors in science, faith in the fourfold light of Christ's wisdom offers a corrective to literalism and rationalism. Such wisdom leads to "admiration and ecstasy,"[131] and away from adultery against the contemplative's true spouse: Wisdom.[132] The analysis now turns to consider the four forms of that Wisdom, who is Christ.

Sapientia Uniformis: Reading the Literal Sense[133]

Scripture's literal sense is not simply given, it must be interpreted, and the philosophical understanding that one brings to the text greatly impacts how one interprets the literal sense,[134] which in turn, impacts how the exegete contemplates Scripture.[135] The philosophical presupposition of *uniform* wisdom presents Bonaventure's hermeneutical perspective toward the literal sense.[136] Even though *uniform* wisdom and Scripture's literal sense are not synonymous, the rules of the divine law become the transcendent signified of the literal sense that 1) ascribe certitude to Scripture's revelation, which 2) create a hermeneutical framework that largely defines how Bonaventure teaches the *vir spiritualis* to understand and to interpret the literal sense.[137]

The imagery of Egypt and the first Tablet elucidate Bonaventure's presentation. The first commandment's broader context reads: "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me."[138]

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[131] *Hex* 2.7 (5.337b): ". . . admiratione et ecstasi . . ."

[132] *Hex* 2.7 (5.337b). Also see Delorme, *Hex* 2.7 (p. 23).

[133] *Hex* 2.9–10 (5.337b–338a); Delorme, *Hex* 2.9–10 (pp. 23–24); Muñoz, *La Sabiduría Cristiana*, pp. 198–213.

[134] On the utility of medieval university studies and theology, see James Ginther, "Laudat sensum et significationem: Robert Grosseteste on the Four Senses of Scripture," in *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe, et al., (New York, 2003), pp. 237–255.

[135] Ginther, "Laudat sensum et significationem," p. 246.

[136] Nowhere in his treatment of uniform wisdom does Bonaventure mention the literal sense. However, every other time he considers the senses of Scripture, he includes all four: *Breviloquium* prol. 4 (5.205b–206b), *De reductione artium ad theologiam* 5, 26 (5.321b, 325b), and *Hex* 13.10–33 (5.389b–392b). The omission of the literal sense in multiform wisdom provides ancillary evidence that uniform wisdom functions in this capacity.

[137] While not synonymous, Bonaventure closely joins philosophy and the literal sense. *Hex* 13.10–11 (5.389b).

[138] Ex 20:2–3: "Ego sum Dominus Deus tuus qui eduxi te de terra Aegypti de domo servitutis; non habebis deos alienos coram me."

Those who do not desire the rules of the divine law renounce God's immutable wisdom and return to slavery in Egypt. Instead of slavery, all should desire to be bound by the God's rules, which illuminate all the ways the mind knows and judge.[139] Hence, the supreme principle must be supremely venerated, the supreme truth supremely believed, and the supreme good supremely desired.[140] This triad of *uniform* wisdom prepares the *vir spiritualis* for the spiritual senses of *multiform* wisdom. Both are representations of the Trinity,[141] and square with Bonaventure's consistent understanding of the relationship between philosophy and theology.[142]

While the imagery of Egypt conjures transgression in the abstract, Bonaventure identifies the philosophers' specific idolatry of rejecting Christ as God's exemplary light, which breaks the first commandment, and, as the imagery suggests, returns them to slavery in Egypt. Against such idolatry, the *lux aeterna* of Christ's exemplarist wisdom guides the contemplative between the dual errors of ontologism, which directly apprehends uncreated light, and emanationism, which only apprehends the rules through a succession of created lights.[143] Such subtlety argues for a direct albeit mediated understanding of revelation. Bonaventure's philosophical consideration concerning the epistemological possibility for revelation frames his hermeneutical perspective regarding the literal sense, which is the vehicle of God's revelation.[144] Thus, in the contemplative ascent, *multiform* wisdom builds upon but surpasses *uniform* wisdom.[145]

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[139] *Hex* 2.9 (5.338a). Bonaventure's teaching on the eternal reasons lies behind his articulation of uniform wisdom, see Muñoz, *La Sabiduría Cristiana*, pp. 198–204.

[140] *Hex* 2.9 (5.338a).

[141] Earlier, in *Collationes de decem praeceptis* 1.22 (5.510a–b), Bonaventure interprets the first Tablet according to the Trinity; the first commandment represents the Father's majesty, which should be humbly adored; the second the Son's truth, which should be faithfully confessed; and the third, the Spirit's goodness, which should be ardently loved. In 2.9 and 3.2 (5.512a, 516a), Bonaventure then expands these Trinitarian associations. Bonaventure also interprets the spiritual senses according to the Trinity, see *Hex* 13.11 (5.389b).

[142] Quinn, *The Historical Constitution of St. Bonaventure's Philosophy*, pp. 671–704, 723–760, especially 781–786.

[143] *Hex* 2.10 (5.338a). Also see *Hex* 7.13 (5.367b).

[144] On the three meanings of *revelatio* in the *Hexaemeron*, see: Ratzinger, *The Theology of History*, p. 59.

[145] *Hex* 2.18 (5.339a).

Sapientia Multiformis: Reading the Spiritual Senses[146]

Multiform wisdom appears in Scripture's many mysteries of figures, sacraments, and signs, which only the humble can properly discern[147] because faith can only be possessed through humility.[148] Thus, an interpretive disposition of humility before Scripture is a precondition for interpreting the spiritual senses; without humility there is no revelation, and is why Christ's wisdom eludes the wise.[149] In effect, humility gives rise to faith, hope and charity, which anchor the spiritual senses:

> A threefold understanding shines forth in Scriptures, which teaches what to believe, what to expect, and what to do: what to believe regarding faith; what to expect regarding hope; and what to do regarding charity, which consists in action, not only in affection.[150]

Bonaventure parallels allegory with faith, anagogy with hope, and tropology with charity. He then elaborates by showing that each sense of Scripture is twofold. Allegory alludes to the faith found in Christ *and* through the Church.[151] Anagogy alludes to the hope found

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[146] *Hex* 2.11–19 (5.338a–339b); Delorme, *Hex* 2.11–19 (pp. 24–26); Muñoz, *La Sabiduría Cristiana*, pp. 230–52. Muñoz inverts *multiform* and *omniform* in an effort to systemize the four forms according to a philosophy-theology dialectic. However, such interpretive imposition skews the text's integrity, which subverts the order and meaning of the lectures. Neither the Quaracchi nor the Delorme editions evidence any reason for the inversion.

[147] *Hex* 2.12 (5.338b): "Haec igitur sapientia dicitur multiformis, quia multi sunt modi experimendi; et ideo necesse fuit, ut ostendatur sapientia in multis figuris, multis Sacramentis, multis signis, ut etiam veletur superbis, aperiatur humilibus." Collation 2 only considers the Scriptures "many figures." Later, collation 13 (5.387a–392b) revisits the *multis figuris* as the *spirituals intelligentias* of the four senses; collations 14–15 (5.393a–402b) cover the *multis sacramentis* as the *sacramentales figuras* that point to Christ and the Antichrist; and collations 16–19 (5.403a–424b) consider the *multis signis* as the *multiformes theorias*, which are virtually infinite. For a detailed study of exegesis in the *Hexaemeron* see Katharina Brüman, "Bonaventuras Hexaemeron als Schriftauslegung," *Franziskanische Studien* 48 (1966), pp. 1–74, especially 21–26, which treats the four senses.

[148] *Hex* 2.19 (5.339b).

[149] *Hex* 2.12 (5.338b). Also see *Hex* 1.24 (5.333b).

[150] *Hex* 2.13 (5.338b): "Triplex refulget intelligentia in Scriptura, quae docet, quid credendum, quid exspectandum, quid operandum: quid credendum quantum ad fidem; quid exspectandum quantum ad spem; quid operandum quantum ad caritatem, quae consistit in operatione, non solum in affectione." Also see *Hex* 2.17 (5.339a).

[151] *Hex* 2.14 (5.338b). As instructive examples, *Hex* 2.15 (5.338b–339a) cites 1 Cor 10:1–4 to demonstrate how to exegete Christ allegorically and Gal 4:22–24 for the allegoresis of the Church.

in divine hierarchy of the Trinity *and* reflected in the heavenly hierarchy of the angels.[152] Tropology alludes to the charity found in the active life *and* the contemplative life.[153] With this doubling, Bonaventure constructs a threefold hierarchy that corresponds to the six days of creation, which the exegete contemplates via three senses of Scripture.

Having mapped the spiritual senses, Bonaventure provides an example of spiritual exegesis to demonstrate how to interpret allegorically so as to move from the letter's external literalness to its internal, spiritual meaning.[154] Such exegesis reveals Scripture's many mysteries that, like mirrors, reflect God's glory and therefore can transform the exegete "into God's very image from clarity to clarity," that is, from the allegorical, to the anagogical, and tropological.[155] Only the contemplatives who understand Scripture according to the spiritual senses have their *facies revelata.* Such revelation requires faith, which in turn, requires humility. Thus, Bonaventure ends by returning where he began: humility—without it, the *vir spiritualis* receives no revelation.

The transforming activity of spiritual exegesis reflexively imprints the proper scriptural grammar or interpretive horizon, through and in which the exegete interprets all reality and constructs all meaning. Thus, the contemplative, transformed and reformed by reading the book written within via allegory, can now correctly reread the book written without according to analogy.[156]

Sapientia Omniformis: Re-reading the Exegete's Cognition[157]

Contemplation heals creation's unintelligibility that results from Scriptural illiteracy. So, while the vestiges of divine works are

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[152] *Hex* 2.16 (5.339a).

[153] *Hex* 2.17 (5.339a).

[154] *Hex* 2.18 (5.339a).

[155] *Hex* 2.19 (5.339b): "Haec est Scriptura, ut revelata facie gloriam Domini speculantes, in eandem imaginem transformemur a claritate in claritatem (2 Cor 3:18): a claritate allegoriae in claritatem anagogiae, et rursus tropologiae."

[156] *Hex* 12.14–17 (5.386b–387b). Collation 2 first presents multiform wisdom (Scripture), the book written within, and then considers omniform wisdom, the book written without. However, the transition from collation 12 to 13, inverts the books' relationship. Nevertheless, both books only become readable by faith, *Hex* 8–12 (5.369a–387b), which itself is revealed in Scripture. Collation 2 first presents the transformation of the image through spiritual exegesis, which reflexively allows an awareness of the vestiges of divine works.

[157] *Hex* 2.20–27 (5.339b–340b); Delorme, *Hex* 2.20–27 (pp. 26–29); Muñoz, *La Sabiduría Cristiana*, pp. 214–229.

omnipresent, "we do not find her (wisdom), just like an unlettered person who holds a book and does not take care of it. So it is with us; for Scripture has been given to us in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew and its source remains thoroughly unknown."[158] Wisdom's source is the "most high, omnipotent Creator of all things" who "created her (wisdom) in the Holy Spirit."[159] As such, wisdom's source is manifest in all things as vestige, image or similitude.[160] However, the mere curious study of creatures, like the investigations of the philosophers, keeps the wisdom of God's vestiges hidden.[161] But the contemplative, rehabilitated and illumined by Scripture, perceives the omnipotent Creator as omnipresent in creation in at least three ways: according to essence, substance, and image, each of which manifests Trinitarian analogies. 1) God orders all created essences by their measure, number and weight thereby giving everything its mode (that by which it exists), species (that by which it is distinct), and order (that by which it relates).[162] Both triads are vestiges of the Trinity. 2) Substances are vestiges because every created thing has matter (original principle), form (complement) and composition (the bond between matter and form), which constitute any existing thing according to its substance, power and operation.[163] Again, both triads are vestiges of the Trinity. 3) While remaining a vestige, the human creature is also created as an image of God in two ways: according to nature as memory, intellect and will, and according to grace as immortality (memory remembers eternity), understanding (intellect understands truth), and joy (will delights in goodness).[164] Thus, grace reforms the natural image,[165] and both are images of the Trinity.

Like Scripture, all of creation is a mirror reflecting the light of divine wisdom: "And so it is clear that the whole world is like a

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[158] *Hex* 2.20 (5.340a): "Et tamen nos non invenimus eam [sapientiam], sicut laicus nesciens litteras et tenens librum non curat de eo; sic nos; unde haec scriptura facta est nobis Graeca, barbara et Hebraea et penitus ignota in suo fonte."

[159] *Hex* 2.20 (5.339b): "Unus est altissimus Creator omnium omnipotens (Sir 1:8). Sequitur: Ipse creavit illam in Spiritu sancto . . . (Prov 1:20)."

[160] Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order*, pp. 105–19, 151–60; Jay M. Hammond, "Bonaventure, St.," in *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, second edition (Washington, D.C., 2003), p. 486.

[161] *Hex* 2.21 (5.340a). Also see *Hex* 12.15 (5.386b).

[162] *Hex* 2.23 (5.340a).

[163] *Hex* 2.23 (5.340a) and 2.26 (5.340b).

[164] *Hex* 2.27 (5.340b).

[165] *Hex* 2.27 (5.340b).

single mirror full of lights presenting the divine wisdom, and emitting light like a glowing coal."[166] Through humility, the exegete becomes a contemplative who speculates God's presence in the mirrors (*specula*) of Scripture and creation. Here reading trains the intellect to perceive God's vestiges and image throughout all creation. However, such discursive speculation gives way to similitude and affective union with God.

Sapientia Nulliformis: Re-reading the Exegete's Volition[167]

With *nulliform* wisdom the "mind is joined to God,"[168] and "is placed in ecstasy"[169] through the Spirit's power. As already mentioned, desire is the primary characteristic of *nulliform* wisdom.[170] Such affectivity transcends every understanding,[171] can only be known by experience,[172] requires grace,[173] the direct revelation of the Word and Spirit,[174] and the necessity of prayer.[175] However, it is to the Trinity that Bonaventure ultimately directs the *apex affectus* and his prayer.[176] In effect, contemplation of the Trinity joins wisdom's four forms together because everything is a *reductio* to the divine *circumincessio: uniform* wisdom's three rules (principle, truth, good) of the divine law; *multiform* wisdom's three spiritual senses (allegory, anagogy, tropology) of Scripture; *omniform* wisdom's three analogies (essence, substance, and image) of creation; and *nulliform* wisdom's three negating attributes (super-substantial, super-divine, super-good) of the Trinity. In effect, the divine mystery of the Trinity is the source and summit of the entire contemplative

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[166] *Hex* 2.27 (5.340b): "Et sic patet, quod totus mundus est sicut unum speculum plenum luminibus praesentantibus divinam sapientiam, et sicut carbo effundens lucem."

[167] *Hex* 2.28–34 (5.340b-342b); Delorme, *Hex* 2.28–34 (pp. 29–33); Muñoz, *La Sabiduría Cristiana*, pp. 253–263.

[168] *Hex* 2.30 (5.341b): "Unde cum mens in illa unione coniuncta est Deo."

[169] *Hex* 2.30 (5.341b): "Et tunc homo alienatus est a sensibus et in ecstasi positus et audit arcana verba, quae non licet homini loqui (2 Cor 12:4)."

[170] See footnote 109 and related text.

[171] *Hex* 2.29 (5.341a).

[172] *Hex* 2.29 (5.341a).

[173] *Hex* 2.30 (5.341a).

[174] *Hex* 2.30 (5.341b).

[175] *Hex* 2.32 (5.342b).

[176] Bonaventure cites Pseudo-Dionysius's opening prayer to the Trinity in *De mystica theologia* 1.1.

exercise. Along the way, meditative reading progressively conditions the will to seek God in all things, but even more so, to transcend everything in mental ecstasy and meet the author of wisdom itself in the darkness of enlightenment. Thus, the inspiration of the Spirit's unifying love totally transfers and transforms the contemplative into God, the author of wisdom's four forms.

Third, the entire interpretive process of wisdom's four forms is an elaborate example of the reciprocity between the contemplative practices of *lectio divina* and *lectio spiritualis*. One side of the reflexivity has *uniform* and *multiform* wisdom preparing the exegete for discerning Scripture's intentionality while the other side of the reflexivity has *omniform* and *nulliform* wisdom reforming the exegete's intentionality. Together, the reflexive praxis of wisdom's four forms fosters a habit of thinking through contemplative performance.

Collation 19 specifically lays out a program for reading Scripture that moves from knowledge to wisdom by means of sanctity.[177] Reading Scripture trains the contemplative intellectually and affectively.[178] For Bonaventure, the real problem is not what the *viri spirituales* read,[179] but how they read.[180] This hermeneutic concern governs his considerations of metaphysics and morals, scholastic and monastic discipline, the reflexivity of wisdom's four forms, the relation between *intellectus* and *affectus*, and the symbiosis between intellectual and sapiential contemplation. All of these dialectical relations condition a kind of "spiritual thinking" similar to the linked practices of *lectio divina* and *lectio spiritualis*. The *lectio divina* of the sacred page should open to the *lectio spiritualis* where the exegete contemplates various intellectual and affective responses to the text. However, the threefold Word is the contemplative key (*clavis*) that engenders such "spiritual thinking."

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[177] *Hex* 19.3 (5.420a–b). Collations 17–19 consider Scripture's restoring nourishment (*reficio*) of the *intellectus* in *Hex* 17 (5.409a–414b), and the *affectus* in *Hex* 18 (5.414a–419b), which combine into wisdom attained through sanctity in *Hex* 19 (5.420a–424b).

[178] *Hex* 19.5 (5.421a).

[179] Although Bonaventure favors a certain order to reading, he does not exclude any writings. The writings of Scripture, the saints, the masters and the philosophers are all acceptable. See *Hex* 19.6 and 19.15 (5.421a, 422b).

[180] *Hex* 19.7 (5.421a–b).

Contemplating the Threefold Word as the Key to All Understanding

The several triads of collations 1–2 find their resolution in the *triplex Verbum* of collation 3, which is the organizational point of departure for the entire *Hexaemeron*.[181] Therein Bonaventure concludes the introduction by arguing that Christ, the *triplex Verbum*, is the contemplative key who gives the fullness of all knowledge, understanding and wisdom. Thus, contemplation is a *triplex intellectus* of the *triplex Verbum*[182] that manifests the expressive mystery of the Trinity.[183] The uncreated Word emanates all things from the Father, the incarnate Word restores all things in the eternal/temporal exemplar of the Son, and the inspired Word reveals all things in the consummation of the Holy Spirit. With the *triplex Verbum*, Bonaventure joins creation, knowledge, and salvation within a Trinitarian dynamic of exit-exemplar-return, which unfolds *per Verbum*:

> Therefore, the key to contemplation is a triple understanding: understanding of the uncreated Word by whom all things are produced; understanding of the incarnate Word by whom all things are restored; understanding of the inspired Word by whom all things are revealed. For no one can have understanding without considering where things come from, how they are led back to their end, and how God shines forth in them.[184]

Such *intellectus* is the goal of *contemplatio caelestium*,[185] through and in which Bonaventure's doctrine of exemplarism receives its fullest expression. The eternal expression of the uncreated Word explains how

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[181] Bonaventure devotes the entire third collation to the *triplex Verbum* [*Hex* 3 (5.343a–348b)], and the first eight numbers of collation 9 [*Hex* 9.1–8 (5.372a–374b)]. The definitive study of the *triplex Verbum* is Maranesi, *Verbum inspiratum: Chiave ermeneutica dell'Hexaëmeron di San Bonaventura*, especially pp. 119–40; on p. 126 he identifies collation 3 as the *Hexaemeron's* organizational center. Also see Gerken, *Theologie des Wortes: Das Verhältnis von Schöpfung und Inkarnation bei Bonaventura*. Gerken focuses on the uncreated and incarnate Word, while Maranesi focuses on the inspired Word.

[182] The *Hexaemeron* picks up where the collation 8 of the *Collationes de septem donis Spiritus Sancti* ended; see *Hex* 3.1 (5.343a).

[183] *Hex* 9.2 (5.372b–373a). Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 138–40; Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order*, pp. 114–17; and Hayes, *Hidden Center*, pp. 60–61.

[184] *Hex* 3.2 (5.343a): "Clavis ergo contemplationis est intellectus triplex, scilicet intellectus Verbi increati, per quod omnia producuntur; intellectus Verbi incarnati, per quod omnia reparantur; intellectus Verbi inspirati, per quod omnia revelantur. Nisi enim quis possit considerare de rebus, qualiter originantur, qualiter in finem reducuntur, et qualiter in eis refulget Deus; intelligentiam habere non potest."

[185] *Hex* 3.1 (5.343a). Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 128–137.

all things come from God; the restoration of the incarnate Word explicates how all things reflect God; and the revelations of the inspired Word elucidate how all things return to God. In effect, Christ is the one *magister* who gives understanding that leads from knowledge to wisdom.[186] Like Francis, the contemplative should hunger and thirst after Christ by first ingesting the solid food of *intellectus* before consuming the flowing wine of *sapientia* that inebriates the soul.[187]

Intellectus of the threefold Word supplies the grammar for Bonaventure's entire synthesis, which envisions reality linguistically because Christ is the Word of God.[188] The Word's mediation simultaneously interconnects all existence, both divine and created, and so the Word is both the self-expression of the divine order within and the exemplar of the created order without.[189] Moreover, the Word's mediation also constructs all meaning because the "signs" of language and the "signified" of reality are synonymous in the Word.[190] As Word, Christ mediates all reality and this fact is precisely what Bonaventure means by *triplex intellectus*: how one understands the *Verbum* constructs how one understands (*intellegit*). In short, the *triplex Verbum* is the contemplative key of Bonaventure's "hermeneutic circle."[191]

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[186] *Hex* 3.1 (5.343a).

[187] *Hex* 3.1 (5.343a). See Delorme, *Hex* 3.1 (pp. 33–34), which directly ties the relationship between understanding and wisdom to the exercise of contemplation in three places.

[188] *Hex* 3.4 (5.343b–344a). As *Verbum*, Christ is the medium of all language about God. See Ewert Cousins, "Bonaventure's Mysticism of Language," in *Language and Mysticism*, ed. Steven Katz (New York, 1992), pp. 236–357, especially 240–243 and 250–252.

[189] In the divine order of God's unity and plurality, the Word is the center joining the Father and the Spirit. In the created order of creation's unity and plurality, the Word is the center joining the exit from and the return to the Trinitarian mystery. For a more detailed explanation see Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order*, pp. 61–77. Also see Gerken, *Theologie des Wortes*, p. 21; and Hammond, "Bonaventure, St.," pp. 486–487.

[190] *Hex* 3.8 (5.344b).

[191] The mention of hermeneutic circle implies two things: 1) Bonaventure derives his understanding of the threefold Word from Scripture, and 2) it is according to the threefold Word that Bonaventure reads Scripture, which makes the rest of reality intelligible. In effect, Scripture teaches Christ and Christ is the teacher/author of Scripture. Thus, in delivering his lectures, Bonaventure enacts a grammar for interpreting reality according to the *triplex Verbum*, and he is critically aware that this grammar produces a hermeneutic circle. For Bonaventure, it is less about interpreting Scripture and more about being interpreted by it because the interpreter is always wrapped in a narrative that presupposes a hermeneutical stance.

Verbum Increatum: Intellectus Exitus

The first key and door to contemplation is the understanding of the uncreated Word,[192] which both the philosophers and Jews reject because of their lack of faith.[193] On the one hand, the philosopher, who argues inductively while assuming that an effect must be similar to its cause, denies that the Word can be the eternal cause of all created things.[194] On the other hand, the Jew, who accepts Scripture but denies the distinction of the divine persons, cannot understand that the uncreated Word is the basis for all understanding.[195] In contrast to both, faith in the uncreated Word teaches the contemplative: "there is no understanding except through the Word."[196] The mystery of the Word's eternal generation is the interpretive key that unlocks a sixfold contemplation of how unity causes plurality, eternity causes time, actuality causes possibility, stability causes change, simplicity causes complexity, and how the highest causes the lowest. Such contemplation purges the soul by faith,[197] and leads to the illumination of the incarnate Word.

Verbum Incarnatum: Intellectus Exemplar

The second key to contemplation is the understanding of how the incarnate Word restores all things.[198] Christ's incarnation exegetes God's plan for salvation and therefore teaches the exegete how to contemplate both testaments of Scripture:[199]

> Then [Christ] opened their senses, when they understood the Scriptures, that is, the book of Scripture has to be understood through the key of the incarnate Word because it is principally about the works of restoration. For unless you understand the order and the origin of restoration, you cannot understand Scripture.[200]

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[192] *Hex* 3.4 (5.343b).

[193] *Hex* 3.4 (5.343b–344a) and 3.9 (5.345a).

[194] *Hex* 3.3 and 3.4 (5.343b). Also see Delorme, *Hex* 3.4 (p. 35), and footnote 66 and related text.

[195] *Hex* 3.4 (5.344a). Also see Delorme, *Hex* 3.4 (p. 35).

[196] *Hex* 3.9 (5.345a): "Unde non contingit intelligere nisi per Verbum."

[197] *Hex* 3.9 (5.345a).

[198] *Hex* 3.10 (5.345a).

[199] *Hex* 3.10 (5.345a) and 3.11 (5.345a).

[200] *Hex* 3.11 (5.345a): "Tunc aperuit illis sensum (Lk 24:45), quando intellexerunt Scripturas, id est, per hanc clavem Verbi incarnati liber Scripturae habet intelligi,

The contemplative must understand both Scripture and Christ because Scripture teaches the exegete about Christ who restores all things, and Christ teaches the exegete the meaning of Scripture, the story of salvation history.

Bonaventure explains the incarnate Word's ordering of salvation history by simply calling Christ the Hierarch.[201] As Hierarch, Christ is *the* key to heavenly contemplation (*contemplatio caelestium*) because he simultaneously unites the inner hierarchy of the soul, the outer hierarchy of the earthly church, the transcendent hierarchy of the heavenly church, and the divine hierarchy of the Trinity. Throughout, Christ is the one Hierarch who is the center of each hierarchy beginning in the highest hierarchy of the Trinity through the intermediate hierarchies of the angels and church into the lowest hierarchy of the human soul. By Christ's grace, the contemplative participates fully in the earthly church, becomes more like the heavenly church, and continually becomes a fuller expressed similitude of the Trinity. Experiential understanding of these hierarchical relationships is the contemplative's ultimate goal,[202] and involves two dimensions: 1) the Hierarch mends the hierarchical relationships broken by sin while 2) simultaneously teaching the contemplative how to exegete Scripture allegorically. The contemplative must understand both, which Bonaventure describes with six examples.[203]

First, salvation is wrought by the preeminent power of God's Son and Word because Christ's plurality of natures, the miracle of miracles, unites the highest to the lowest, the first to the last, thereby restoring everything in between. The miracle of the incarnation strengthens faith and illumines the mind to interpret Scripture allegorically.[204] Thus, exegetically, all of Scripture's miracles relate to *the*

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eo quod est principaliter de operibus reparationis. Nisi enim intelligas ordinem et originem reparationis, Scripturam intelligere non potes."

[201] With the mention of Christ as Hierarch, Bonaventure identifies the third of his three favorite titles for Christ in the *Hexaemeron's* introduction. Christ is the *Medium*, *triplex Verbum*, and *Hierarcha*. See Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order*, pp. 121–28, Hayes, *The Hidden Center*, pp. 87–90, and Gerken, *Theologie des Wortes*, pp. 238–40, 254–256, 310–312.

[202] *Hex* 20–23 (5.425a–449b), on the fourth vision of understanding lifted up by contemplation, specifically concerns the contemplation of the hierarchies of heaven, the church, and the soul, all of which reflect the divine hierarchy of the Trinity. See Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order*, pp. 151–160.

[203] *Hex* 3.12 (5.345a), and Delorme, *Hex* 3.21 (p. 43).

[204] *Hex* 3.13 (5.345a–b).

miracle of the incarnation.[205] Second, Christ's threefold intelligence of innate, infused, and eternal wisdom enables him to restore the world because he fully knows the world's conditions.[206] He fully knows those conditions because, via experience, Christ is fully human,[207] and so, all become wise by simulation of Christ's wisdom.[208] Thus, exegetically, all Scriptural wisdom refers to Christ.[209] Third, since Christ is the most acceptable to God, he is the most sacred reconciler,[210] not only because he was entirely deiform, but because he is God.[211] As God, all the holiest examples flow from Christ.[212] Thus, exegetically, all Scriptural references to emanations, rivers, and fountains refer to Christ.[213] Fourth, since Christ is totally victorious by his triumphs and victories, he is called strong, and from him come strong defenses.[214] Thus, exegetically, all the wars in Scripture refer to Christ's victories.[215] Fifth, Christ is most generous with his gifts,[216] especially the gift of the Holy Spirit who purifies, illumines, and perfects; [217] all three are free gifts flowing from Christ.[218] Thus, exegetically, whatever Scripture says about diffusions and banquets refer to Christ's lavish generosity.[219] Sixth, Christ is supremely just in administering retribution according to everyone's deeds.[220] Christ perfectly judges because he is God.[221] Thus, exegetically, all the judgments in Scripture refer to Christ's final judgment.[222]

The six examples of the incarnate Word's contemplative key reveal how Christ restores all things and how everything in Scripture reveals Christ. Although Scripture and Christ are the reciprocal foci of the exegete's contemplation, illumination of the incarnation's revelations

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[205] *Hex* 3.13 (5.345b) and Delorme, *Hex* 3.13 (p. 39).
[206] *Hex* 3.14 (5.345b).
[207] *Hex* 3.15 (5.345b).
[208] *Hex* 3.15 (5.346a).
[209] *Hex* 3.16 (5.346a).
[210] *Hex* 3.17 (5.346a).
[211] *Hex* 3.17 (5.346a).
[212] *Hex* 3.17 (5.346a).
[213] *Hex* 3.17 (5.346a).
[214] *Hex* 3.18 (5.346a).
[215] *Hex* 3.18 (5.346b).
[216] *Hex* 3.19 (5.346b).
[217] *Hex* 3.19 (5.346b).
[218] *Hex* 3.19 (5.346b).
[219] *Hex* 3.19 (5.346b).
[220] *Hex* 3.21 (5.346b).
[221] *Hex* 3.21 (5.347a).
[222] *Hex* 3.21 (5.347a).

is impossible without the contemplative's subjective participation in the inspired Word because:[223] "The third key is the understanding of the inspired Word, by whom all things are revealed; for there is no revelation except through the inspired Word."[224]

Verbum Inspiratum: Intellectus Reditus[225]

With the revelation of the inspired Word, the contemplative undergoes a *reductio* whereby everything, including the *triplex Verbum* itself, is brought into a hierarchical unity: "Therefore this [Word] is the key of David which the inspired Word teaches: this Word who is uncreated in the bosom of the Father, incarnate in the virgin's womb, and inspired in your heart by faith."[226] Here Bonaventure's hermeneutic circle completes itself. Contemplation begins with the "objective" *exitus* of the Father's fecund activity in the uncreated Word, the Son's saving activity in the incarnate Word, and the Spirit's consummating activity in the inspired Word, which in turn, draws the contemplative into the "subjective" *reditus* whereby everything returns by the revelations of the inspired Word, through the salvation of the incarnate Word, into unity with the Father according to the eternal generation of the uncreated Word.[227]

Contemplation of the *exitus/reditus* movement hinges on Christ[228] who is the *triplex Verbum*, the *medium*, and the Hierarch who reduces the lowest through the middle to the highest.[229] Thus, Christ is the

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[223] Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 139–140.

[224] *Hex* 3.22 (5.347a): "Tertia clavis est intellectus Verbi inspirati, per quod omnia revelantur; non enim fit revelatio nisi per Verbum inspiratum." See Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 160–167.

[225] There are three basic parts to Bonaventure's consideration of the inspired Word: 1) the revelation of the inspired Word, which includes the three general kinds of vision (22–23), the six intellectual visions of the *Hexaemeron* (24–31), and the *reductio* through the inspired Word (32). I treat the last first because the *reductio* frames the contemplative ascent. On the structure see Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, p. 155.

[226] *Hex* 3.32 (5.348b): "Haec est ergo clavis David (Rev 3:7), quae docet Verbum inspiratum: illud Verbum, quod est in sinu Patris (Jn 1:18) increatum, incarnatum in utero virginis, inspiratum in corde tuo per fidem." See Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 319–324, 378–379.

[227] Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 325–329; Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order*, pp. 189–190, 80–81.

[228] *Hex* 3.32 (5.348b).

[229] *Hex* 3.32 (5.348b). Also see: *II Sent*, d. 11, a. 1, q. 1, resp. (2.277b) and *Breviloquium* 2.9 (5.226).

"divinely ordered light" that descends to illuminate the heavenly and ecclesial hierarchies[230] so that the contemplative, illumined by Christ's light, can ascend to heavenly and then to super-heavenly contemplation.[231] In the six visions that follow (cols. 4–23), Bonaventure details the contemplative ascent, which he outlines in the third collation.

On the *via reductionis*, the inspired Word revives the contemplative's spiritual senses for understanding visions,[232] which are threefold.[233] Yet, bodily and imaginary visions are useless without *visio intellectualis*,[234] which is *revelatio* by means of the inspired Word.[235] The *Hexaemeron*'s sixfold vision is an example of such intellectual vision, so Bonaventure envisions the *Hexaemeron*'s entire interpretive exercise as actually flowing from the inspired Word's activity,[236] which the *vir spiritualis* must receive into his heart. Ultimately, contemplation requires inspiration whereby the Spirit teaches the exegete how to read; literally to "breath in" during the silent pauses[237] during the process of meditatively reading the six days of creation in Genesis. Thus, the *lectio divina* of the Genesis narrative transforms into the *lectio spiritualis* of the *Hexaemeron*'s quest for *intellectus* through contemplation.

By such contemplation, the microcosm of the soul (the internal narrative) can be made perfect like the macrocosm (the external narrative) was in six days.[238] Hence, just as God created the world is six days, God also creates all understanding according to a sixfold vision.[239] The first vision involves understanding given by nature,[240] which has three basic parts,[241] and concerns what understanding can

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[230] *Hex* 3.32 (5.348b).
[231] *Hex* 3.32 (5.348b).
[232] *Hex* 3.22 (5.347a).
[233] *Hex* 3.23 (5.347a). Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 169–170.
[234] *Hex* 3.23 (5.347a), and Delorme, *Hex* 3.23 (p. 44). Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 171–176.
[235] Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 159, 171–174.
[236] See the conclusion to Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 398–399.
[237] *Hex* 17.27 (5.413b).
[238] *Hex* 3.24 (5.347a). Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 387–396.
[239] *Hex* 3.24 (5.347a).
[240] *Hex* 3.25 (5.347a); collations 4–7 (5.349a–368b); Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 181–194; Marc Ozilou, *Les Six Jours de la Création* (Paris, 1991), pp. 67–72.
[241] The three parts are: 1) theoretical philosophy (col. 4–5.22), 2) sapiential contemplation (col. 5.23–32), and 3) practical philosophy (cols. 6–7). Thus, the threefold division of *scientia* in collations 4–7 parallels the threefold division of *scientia* in collation 1. In both, the theoretical and practical sciences relate according to the exemplarity of the *medium*; see *Hex* 5.33 (5.359b).

acquire independently.[242] By itself, understanding is impossible because without the light of the first day, which is introduced or given (*indito*) by God, only darkness exists.[243] Thus, the first intellectual vision predicates all understanding upon God's revelation of the divine light[244] by which the contemplative not only knows things, but also understands them.[245] Here the *lectio divina* of Genesis 1:4 opens to the exercise of *lectio spiritualis* and to the contemplation of the *lux divina* as the *de facto* foundation of all understanding in the twelve lights of theoretical philosophy[246] and the twelve virtues of practical philosophy.[247]

The second vision, built upon the *intellectus* of the first vision,[248] concerns understanding lifted up by faith,[249] which considers how faith is the singular origin of science and wisdom.[250] Again, the *intellectus fidei* has three aspects: its height (col. 8), its firmness (col. 9), and its splendor (cols. 10–12).[251] Faith's height considers how wisdom and knowledge converge into the understanding of faith according to the two roots of the Christian faith: the mysteries of the Trinity and Christ (col. 8).[252] Faith's firmness wraps those two mysteries into the *triplex Verbum* (col. 9),[253] and faith's splendor opens to a threefold contemplation:[254] 1) of God's *esse* as the threefold cause of every created thing (col. 10);[255] 2) of the Trinity as a twofold mirror of God's

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[242] *Hex* 3.25 (5.347a).
[243] *Hex* 3.25 (5.347a).
[244] *Hex* 4.1 (5.349a) reiterates the divine initiative in the knowing process. Also see *Hex* 6.1 (5.360a–b).
[245] On the crucial distinction between knowing (*scientia*) and understanding (*intellectus*), see: *Hex* 4.1 (5.349a), 5 (5.353a–359b), 6.1–6 (5.360a–361b), and 7.3 (5.365b–366a).
[246] On the twelve lights of theoretical philosophy, which include nine sciences and the three objects of contemplation, see: *Hex* 4.2–5 (5.349a–b), 5.22 (5.357b), 5.23–25 (5.357b–358a), 5.32–33 (5.359b), 4.1 (5.349a), and 5.33 (5.359b).
[247] *Hex* 7.21 (5.368b) summarizes the four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, temperance, fortitude (col. 6), which are multiplied by the three theological virtues: faith, hope, love (col. 7) to create the twelve virtues of practical philosophy.
[248] *Hex* 3.25 (5.347a).
[249] *Hex* 3.26 (5.347b); collations 8–12 (5.369a–387b); Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 227–273; Ozilou, *Les Six Jours de la Création*, pp. 72–76. The imagery of the twelve wings of the two seraphim in *Hex* 8.8–16 (5.370b–371b) parallel the twelve articles of faith in *Hex* 8.17–18 (5.371b) and 10.3 (5.377a), which enable the contemplative ascent toward God.
[250] *Hex* 3.26 (5.347b).
[251] *Hex* 8.3 (5.369b).
[252] *Hex* 8.7–18 (5.370a–371a), especially 9 (5.370b).
[253] *Hex* 9.1–9 (5.372a–374a).
[254] *Hex* 10.3 (5.377b).
[255] *Hex* 10.10–18 (5.378b–379b), especially 10.10 (5.378b).

self-expression within and without (col. 11);[256] and 3) of Christ, the *doctor interius*,[257] as the exemplar of all things known by either reason or faith (col. 12).[258] Throughout, it is the same divine light that informs the *intellectus* of faith's height, strength, and splendor. Here, the *lectio divina* of Genesis 1:8 opens to the exercise of *lectio spiritualis* and to the contemplation of the *lux divina* that reveals the dual understanding of the Trinity and Christ[259] in the twelve articles of faith.[260]

The third vision treats understanding taught by Scripture,[261] which covers Scripture's spiritual meanings.[262] Once again there is a basic three-part division,[263] which leads the contemplative to the tree of life and away from "the tree of inquisitive knowledge."[264] First, Scripture's spiritual meanings, symbolized by the gathering of the waters, treat the four spiritual senses (col. 13). Second, Scripture's sacramental figures, symbolized by the sprouting vegetation, describe the relationship between Christ and the Antichrist in Scripture's drama of salvation history (Christ, col. 14; Antichrist, col. 15). Third, Scripture's multiform theories, symbolized by the seeds and fruit, explain: 1) the successions and correlations of the eras in the Old and New Testaments (col. 16), where temporal imagery constructs the exegete's worldview;[265] 2) the intellectual sustenance that comes from understanding the course of salvation history (col. 17), where spatial imagery creates a mental landscape that constructs the exegete's worldview;[266] 3) the affective nourishment that comes from not only eating, but of also tasting salvation's threefold fruit of grace, righteousness and

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[256] *Hex* 11.5–25 (5.381a–384b), especially 11.5 (5.381a). Also see Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order*, pp. 110–113.

[257] *Hex* 12.5 (5.385a–b).

[258] *Hex* 12.2–17 (5.385a–387b), especially 12.2 (5.385a); also see *Hex* 12.14 (5.386b).

[259] *Hex* 8.5 (5.370a) and 8.7 (5.370a–b).

[260] *Hex* 8.17–18 (5.371b) and 10.3 (5.377b).

[261] *Hex* 3.27 (5.347b); collations 13–19 (5.387a–424b); Maranesi, *Verbum Inspiratum*, pp. 275–318; Ozilou, *Les Six Jours de la Création*, pp. 76–86; Wayne Hellmann, "Scripture: The Dawn of Contemplation as Found in the Collations in Hexaemeron," *Miscellanea francescana* 75 (1975), pp. 563–570; Brüman, "Bonaventuras Hexaemeron als Schriftauslegung," pp. 1–74.

[262] *Hex* 3.27 (5.347b).

[263] *Hex* 13.2 (5.388a).

[264] *Hex* 3.27 (5.347b). Also contrast *Hex* 14.30 (5.398a–b) with 17.27 (5.413b–414a). In *Hex* 13.7 (5.389a), Bonaventure is especially concerned with the "correct" interpretation of Scripture.

[265] *Hex* 16.2–9 (5.403b–404b), summarized in 16.31 (5.408b).

[266] *Hex* 17.4–8 (5.409b–410b). Moreover, *Hex* 18.31 (5.419b) states that the intellectual fruits descend and the affective fruits ascend.

wisdom,[267] which rectifies the intellect and makes speculation practical (col. 18)[268] according to spatial imagery that continues to construct the exegete's worldview;[269] and 4) the passage from knowledge to wisdom via sanctity,[270] which constitutes a threefold program for reading Scripture, each of which contains four elements (col. 19).[271] Throughout, it is the same divine light that teaches the exegete Scripture's four senses, sacraments, and multiform theories. Here, the *lectio divina* of Genesis 1:9–11 opens to the exercise of *lectio spiritualis* and to the contemplation of the *lux divina* in the mysteries of Scripture that reveal the plan and course of salvation history. Such revelation feeds the exegete's understanding and affections,[272] according to the twelve lights in Scripture's spiritual meanings, the twelve trees surrounding the tree of life in Scripture's sacramental figures, and the twelve circles/fruits surrounding and sustaining the exegete in Scripture's multiform theories,[273] all of which coalesce into the twelve exercises involved in the study of Scripture.[274]

The fourth vision engages the *intellectus fidei* suspended by contemplation,[275] which only the man of desires can enter.[276] The vision again has three basic parts that consider the contemplation of the super-heavenly, heavenly, and sub-heavenly hierarchies.[277] First, the super-heavenly hierarchy, symbolized by the sun, pertains to the contemplation of the divine Persons who are contemplation's ultimate source, means, and consummation simply because the Trinitarian

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[267] *Hex* 18.5, 9 (5.415b, 416a).
[268] *Hex* 18.3–4 (5.415a–b).
[269] *Hex* 18.17–25 (5.417a–418b).
[270] *Hex* 19.3 (5.420a–b).
[271] 1) *Hex* 19.6–19 (5.421a–b) treats knowledge and the study of Scripture according to four conditions (outlined in 19.6); 2) *Hex* 19.20–23 (5.423b–424a) treats sactity and the study of Scripture according to four conditions (outlined in 19.20); 3) *Hex* 19.24–27 (5.424a–b) treats wisdom and the study of Scripture according to four conditions (outlined in 19.24).
[272] *Hex* 18.1 (5.414a–b).
[273] The twelve lights of Scripture in *Hex* 13.33 (5.392b); the twelve trees around the *Tree of Life* in *Hex* 14.30 (5.398a–b); and the twelve circles/fruits surrounding and sustaining the exegete in *Hex* 18.31–32 (5.319b).
[274] Bonaventure does not mention the twelve characteristics of studying Scripture in a summary, but *Hex* 19.5 (5.421a) does clearly identify their purpose.
[275] *Hex* 3.28 (5.347b); collations 20–23 (5.425a–449b); Ozilou, *Les Six Jours de la Création*, pp. 86–90.
[276] *Hex* 20.1 (5.425a).
[277] *Hex* 3.28 (5.347b). Also see *Hex* 20.3 (5.425b) and 20.26–27 (5.429b–430a).

Hierarchy is the source for all other hierarchies (col. 21).[278] Thus, contemplation of the Trinity makes the soul hierarchical.[279] Second, the sub-heavenly hierarchy, symbolized by the moon, represents the contemplation of the church, [280] which only reflects the light of the Trinity (col. 22).[281] Of the three divisions of orders,[282] Bonaventure lists the contemplative orders last and places Francis, the example of perfect contemplation, within the highest Seraphic order,[283] which signifies those who return to God through ecstasy.[284] Third, the heavenly hierarchy, symbolized by the stars, represents the hierarchical soul,[285] which is called heavenly because it has levels corresponding with the heavenly Jerusalem (col. 22–23).[286] In the contemplation of the ascent, descent, and return of the heavenly Jerusalem (col. 22),[287] the hierarchical soul itself, like a city resembling the heavenly Jerusalem,[288] becomes contemplative.[289] Throughout, it is the same divine light that illumines the *intellectus* of the three hierarchies of the Trinity, the church, and the soul. Here, the *lectio divina* of Genesis 1:14–16 opens to the exercise of *lectio spiritualis* and to the twelve hierarchical illuminations of the *lux divina* that contemplate the ascent, descent and return of all things according to the symbolism of the twelve stars.[290]

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[278] *Hex* 20.4–12 (5.425b–427b) introduces the contemplation of the Trinity, which collation 21 develops. Especially see the summary *Hex* 20.11–12 (5.427a–b), which identities the Trinity as the object of perfect contemplation.

[279] *Hex* 21.16 (5.434a). Also see *Hex* 21.18 (5.434a). On the hierarchical soul see Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order*, pp. 154–156.

[280] *Hex* 20.13–20 (5.427b–429a) introduces contemplation of the ecclesial hierarchy, which *Hex* 22.2–23 (5.438a–440b) develops.

[281] As moon, the church only reflects the sun's light; see *Hex* 20.13 (5.427b) and Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order*, pp. 129–134.

[282] *Hex* 22.2 (5.438a).

[283] *Hex* 22.22 (5.440b).

[284] *Hex* 22.22 (5.440b).

[285] *Hex* 20.21–25 (5.429a–b) introduces the contemplation of the ecclesial hierarchy, which *Hex* 22.24–39 (5.441a–443a–b) and 23 (5.444a–449b) develop. Hierarchization is a technical term that means the soul's total transformation and re-ordering according to the triple way of purgation, illumination and perfection/union, which is accomplished by the grace of Christ who is the Hierarch.

[286] *Hex* 22.24 (5.441a).

[287] *Hex* 22.24 (5.441a). Also see *Hex* 23.5 (5.445b).

[288] *Hex* 23.2 (5.445a).

[289] *Hex* 23.5 (5.445b). On the contemplative soul, see Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order*, pp. 156–160.

[290] *Hex* 23.1 (5.445a).

The fifth and sixth visions do not exist because Bonaventure did not complete the *Hexaemeron*.[291] However, the outline of the visions in the introduction sketches their content. The fifth vision would have covered the understanding enlightened by prophecy,[292] which is like looking into the eternal mirror[293] in a manner that is similar to God's foreknowledge.[294] Likely, the *lectio divina* of Genesis 1:20–25, which describes the creation of the fish, birds and living creatures, would have opened to *lectio spiritualis* and Bonaventure's contemplation of the divine light in prophecy. The sixth vision would have presented the *intellectus fidei* absorbed by rapture,[295] which "makes the soul as similar to God as is possible in the wayfaring state."[296] Likely, the *lectio divina* of Genesis 1:26, which depicts the creation of the *imago Dei*, would have opened to *lectio spiritualis*, and Bonaventure's contemplation of the *lux divina* and its humble reception in rapture.[297] The final vision would have been of the glorified soul, which receives a *status* similar to the rest of the seventh day.[298]

Bonaventure concludes the introduction and begins his collations on the six visions by telling his Franciscan brothers that the inspired Word must inhabit their hearts if they are to become *viri spirituales*, that is, men of desire who understand visions.[299] Thus, citing a prayer from Pseudo-Dionysius, Bonaventure embarks on the six visions by "calling upon Jesus, who is the light of the Father,"[300] to lead his brothers in their contemplative ascent back to God.

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[291] Before Bonaventure could deliver all the collations of the *Hexaemeron*, Gregory X nominated him cardinal in preparation for the upcoming Second Council of Lyon (May–July 1274), where Bonaventure died on the morning of July 15, 1274.

[292] *Hex* 3.24, 29 (5.347a–b); Delorme, *Hex* epilogue (p. 274).

[293] *Hex* 3.29 (5.347b).

[294] *Hex* 3.29 (5.347b).

[295] *Hex* 3.24, 30 (5.347a, 348a); Delorme, *Hex* epilogue (p. 274).

[296] *Hex* 3.30 (5.348a): "Haec enim sublevatio facit animam Deo simillimam, quantum potest in statu viae."

[297] *Hex* 3.30 (5.348a).

[298] *Hex* 3.24, 31 (5.347a, 348b); Delorme, *Hex* epilogue (p. 274).

[299] Delorme, *Hex* 3.32 (p. 47).

[300] *Hex* 3.32 (5.348b): "Ergo Iesum, inquit, invocantes, qui est paternum lumen, etc.," *De caelesti hierarchia*, 1.2.

Conclusion: Reflexive Reading as Contemplative Performance

Bonaventure's death makes the *Collationes in Hexaemeron* the last testament of a theologian preeminently concerned with bringing the minds and hearts of his fellow brothers to the understanding of and love for Christ, the teacher of all *scientia*, *intellectus*, and *sapientia*. Bonaventure attempts his goal by showing his brothers how to read. Thus, the *Hexaemeron* stands as a premier example of the medieval activity of contemplative reading because the collations themselves encode the type of contemplation Bonaventure wants the Franciscan community at Paris to emulate. This is exactly what the *Hexaemeron*'s alternative title *illuminationes ecclesiae* signifies. On one level, Bonaventure's instruction leads the audience to the *illuminationes* by providing examples of reflexive reading that produce a kind of "spiritual thinking" engenderd by the linked practices of *lectio divina* and *lectio spiritualis*. On another level, the *ecclesia* involves a socializing process that emulates Bonaventure's interpretive performance through and in the praxis of contemplative reading itself.

Intellectual and sapiential contemplation teaches the *vir spiritualis* how to cross from worldly wisdom to Christian wisdom via a proper *intellectus* of metaphysics and morals. Yet, the *illuminationes ecclesiae* can only come through desire because knowledge without performance is useless. So, the purpose of reading is not knowledge, but wisdom, which couples understanding with desire. Bonaventure emphasizes this point by repeatedly reminding his brothers that the *vir spiritualis* must be a *vir desiderii*. In short, the goal of contemplation is the construction of a subjectivity that desires experiential union with the Triune God.

If the collations themselves encode the type of contemplation that the Franciscan brothers are to emulate, then Bonaventure, the *interpres* of the Franciscan textual community, actually represents the *vir spiritualis* who learns the meaning of Scripture from Christ who is the *magister*. In the *intellectus* of the threefold Word, Bonaventure contemplates the author of all truth, and the authorial intent of the *triplex Verbum* transforms Bonaventure's own authorial intent, thereby creating a "narrative self" that is inscribed by the Word. For Bonaventure, such inscription by the Word's inspiration is prerequisite for the contemplation to which he summons his brothers as fellow *viri spirituales*.

FIDES QUAERENS INTELLECTUM: JOHN DUNS SCOTUS, PHILOSOPHY AND PRAYER

Mary Beth Ingham

When one thinks of Franciscan spiritual masters, John Duns Scotus (1265–1308) is not a name that comes immediately to mind. It is Bonaventure, rather than Scotus, who is more readily identified with the medieval theological and spiritual tradition. In his homilies and commentaries, Bonaventure stands as the pastoral voice within the Franciscan intellectual tradition.

One may not wish to dismiss Scotus so quickly, however. Closer inspection of his thought does reveal an aspect of the tradition that he shares with Bonaventure: the rational ascent to experience of the divine. Indeed, just as the classic *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* of the Seraphic Doctor traces for us the stages of intellectual ascent to encounter with God, so too might we discover in Scotus's *Tractatus De Primo Principio* his own view of the mind's road to God. The *Tractatus* reproduces an intellectual ascent marked broadly with Augustinian elements, where an initial experience of the contingent world points to a deeper foundation that is both rational and, more importantly, personal. It is the discovery of this rational and personal foundation that is the goal of the intellectual journey. Like Bonaventure, Scotus begins the journey with the created order and moves through it to discover the deeper levels of meaning that exist and ground the order of human experience. Meditation on all that exists introduces the believer into the deeper dimension of divine existence and attributes. Contemplation of these attributes pours forth in praise of the gracious God who has brought forth existence and who continues to sustain it in gracious, loving presence.

Even though Scotus's journey is like that of Augustine (insofar as the created order marks the starting point for the journey) and Bonaventure (insofar as the stages of ascent can be carefully identified), the culmination of the journey is unlike that of the two masters. In Augustine and Bonaventure the journey culminates in some type of mystical experience or union, whether of beauty (as in the *Confessions*,

Book IX)[1] or in silence (as in Bonaventure's seventh day of the *Itinerarium*). These moments are so full that no language is appropriate or sufficient. In Scotus, as we shall see, there is an abundance of language, and specifically the language of praise as he completes the journey of the *Tractatus*. Indeed, there is more going on at the end of the *Tractatus* than at the earlier stages, in terms of a spiritual-intellectual connection. This Scotist predilection to move from silence to praise offers us an opportunity to reflect on the similarities and dissimilarities between Scotus and other members of his own tradition, specifically Bonaventure and more generally, Augustine. What the elements of the spiritual journey are and how they are expressed in the activity of prayer according to Scotus will emerge more clearly after we have traced out the journey and noted the significant aspects.

In what follows, we shall first explore this Scotist journey as it appears in the central text *Tractatus de Primo Principio*, or the Treatise on God as First Principle.[2] From this textual study we attempt to identify elements of Scotus's attitude toward prayer. The *Tractatus* offers Scotus's most compact argument for the existence of God, bringing together various proofs that are found dispersed in his other works. But, in addition to the arguments themselves, Scotus frames the work as an extended meditation on God,[3] both divine existence and divine attributes, of which reason is capable. The treatise begins and ends with extended passages of prayer. Within the treatise, several moments of prayer appear. By following the progression within the text, from its opening prayer to final hymn of praise, we can discover both the Franciscan and particularly Scotist vision of the human spiritual-intellectual journey.[4]

Following our initial investigation of the textual ascent, we will consider its structure as reflective of Scotus's own understanding of the role of prayer in the life of an intellectual. As already noted, in

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[1] The vision at Ostia. See St. Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. R.S. Pine-Coffin (Baltimore, 1961), pp. 196–199.

[2] In this study I am using the Latin-English version of this found in *John Duns Scotus: A Treatise on God as First Principle*, trans. and ed. with commentary by Allan B. Wolter, OFM (Quincy, 1966), hereafter *Treatise*.

[3] Maurice del Porto called it a "discursus contemplationis". Cf. Duns Scotus, *Opera* (Wadding-Vivès 1891), I: pp. 161–164.

[4] Étienne Gilson identified "l'originalité de ces laudes franciscaines" in their "formulation raisonnée en langage abstraitement métaphysique." Cf. "S. François et la pensée médiévale" *Études italiennes*, 8 (1926), pp. 12–27.

its broadest contours Scotus follows the Augustinian and Bonaventurian models for the journey of the mind from creation to the Creator. There are two ways in which this traditional approach is adapted to Scotus's own concerns. In the first, Scotus offers a conceptual prelude to the entire journey with the presentation of the orders of causality (the essential orders). It is only after he has explained these orders that he settles into the actual rational ascent and demonstration. Reflective of his intellectual and metaphysical perspective on the spiritual journey as a whole, Scotus frames the spiritual ascent conceptually within the limits of human reason. This is, I think, not an effort to reduce transcendence to immanence.[5] Rather, it is an effort to show that the human person, a rational-spiritual being, is constituted with all natural gifts needed for the ascent to and demonstration of divine existence. Despite the enormous optimism that we shall see in Scotus's trajectory, there are still elements of the divine being that surpass the natural capacity of human reasoning and belong to the domain of faith.

A second way is more directly related to his Franciscan identity. Within his own perspective as a metaphysician, Scotus offers particular Franciscan elements that play pivotal roles. One key element, the reference to the theophany of the burning bush, opens the treatise. In this way, divine initiative and self-revelation appear central to the entire reflection. These aspects of God's relationship to the world are key elements in Scotus's overall theological vision of salvation history and, more importantly, the Incarnation. Another element emerges from the manner by which natural and sophisticated philosophical reflection intersects with moments of prayerful interlude later, at a central moment of the textual argument. The two are then interwoven throughout the remainder of the work.

The centrality of divine initiative and the intricate weave of rational and spiritual aspirations reveal key Franciscan aspects of Scotist thought in general. They are both present in the *Tractatus*. They also ground his spiritual vision of the way the human person moves toward discovery, meditation upon and praise for the Creator. They offer, finally, a specifically Christian framework for the intellectual life as a manifestation of divine life within us.

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[5] As several critics of Scotus, such as John Milbank and Catherine Pickstock might argue.

For the sake of simplicity and clarity, we shall move through the prayers in this text as they present themselves, considering both their content and their place in the textual argument. This consideration will have three sections. In the first we focus on chapters 1 and 2, where the rational framework of the *Tractatus* is laid out. In this early portion of the text, we take up the prayers that open the two chapters: the opening prayerful recall of the central event of salvation history in Exodus 3:14 (the theophany in the burning bush) and the short prayer that introduces the essential order, the human discovery of causal patterns within reality. In the second section we consider more carefully the role of prayer in chapter 3, the philosophical highpoint of the *Tractatus* where divine existence is demonstrated. Our third section considers the conclusions of the work, both in the sustained rational meditation on divine attributes, especially the longer prayerful reflection prior to the consideration of infinite being and in the prayer of praise that completes the work. After looking at the textual progression, I offer some concluding remarks considering the significance of this Scotist framework, what it reveals about the tradition of Franciscan prayer and what it enables us to conclude about the Subtle Doctor's attitude toward the spiritual-intellectual journey from the mind to God.

The Rational Framework for the Demonstration

The Opening Prayer

Scotus begins the *De Primo Principio* with the following prayer:

> May the First Principle of things grant me to believe, to understand and to reveal what may please his majesty and may raise our minds to contemplate him.
>
> O Lord our God, true teacher that you are, when Moses your servant asked you for your name that he might proclaim it to the children of Israel, you, knowing what the mind of mortals could grasp of you, replied: "I am who am," thus disclosing your blessed name. You are truly what it means to be, you are the whole of what it means to exist. This, if it be possible for me, I should like to know by way of demonstration. Help me then, O Lord, as I investigate how much our natural reason can learn about that true being [*de vero esse*] which you are if we begin with the being [*ab ente*] which you have predicated of yourself.[6]

[6] *Treatise*, 1.1–1.2, p. 2.

Several important points are present in this opening prayer. The prayer for divine assistance in what is about to take place reminds us of the Anselmian opening to the famous *Proslogion*, but it also finds it antecedents in Plato's *Timaeus* 27 and in Plotinus's *Enneads*. It is a trope of significant philosophical and theological provenance. The appeal to the divine theophany in Exodus 3:14 situates the reflection more carefully within the Judaeo-Christian tradition of meditation upon scripture and its significance for the believer. The contextualization of the historical encounter and dialogue with Moses parallels the actual dialogue between Scotus and God, pointing to the interpersonal dimension of the text, its historical point of reference and the goal of the journey.

The connection between language, being and God also reveals the Franciscan's central philosophical insights. The reference to the human mind and its limitations both situates the human journey in its proper perspective and highlights the act of divine graciousness in the act of self-revelation. The identification of being (*ens*) as the starting point for the journey underscores the value of the created order, all that exists, as it relates to the human mind and to God (*esse*). Each of these elements has something to teach us initially about the Franciscan and Scotist attitude toward prayer as a rational activity.

Prayer as Interpersonal Dialogue

The first element we can identify is the primacy of the interpersonal dimension of prayer as a dialogue. This dialogue appears in various ways: the human call and divine answer (as in the *De Primo Principio* itself), the divine call and human answer (as in the burning bush invitation to Moses), the divine self-revelation (as in "I am who am", the reference that is central in this text and opening prayer), and the human self-revelation (in Scotus's own recognition of his limitation in this present request and his need for divine assistance). The language of dialogue is the language of encounter, of initiative, of self-revelation and of response. It is the broad context within which Scotus situates this present prayerful and intellectual consideration of God as source of being.

Here is no abstract mental exercise. Here is no pristine consideration of the nature of reality at its metaphysical foundations. Rather, here is a contemplative exercise of the highest philosophical import. The exercise begins with a dialogical moment where the human

mind, aware of its own limitations and inability to proceed alone, calls upon divine aid, confident that the prayer will be heard. Already Scotus has introduced us into a relationship that involves love, compassion and response.

Divine choice for self-revelation as *being* is grounded, Scotus states, upon God's compassionate awareness of the nature of the human mind and the object of which it is capable in the present state. In other words, just as the human communication to God takes for granted a divine nature that is loving and responsive, so too the divine communication takes for granted the limitations of the human condition and the human desire to respond as fully as rational nature allows. The opening prayer itself claims that we can only use our fullest rational capacity when we have some sort of divine aid.[7] Here the divine aid is self-revelation. This act of divine self-revelation is central to all Scotist thought. The experience of the beatific vision, he claims, will depend primarily upon God's self-revelation, not upon a "light of glory" to illuminate the human mind and raise its capacity to a level of performance that is adequate.[8] The human mind, indeed, human nature is already adequate for the vision. What is lacking is the voluntary act of God in self-manifestation.[9]

Scotist Prayer as a *Via Affirmativa*

Scotus chooses the theophany of the burning bush in a way that brings salvation history into relationship with Aristotelian metaphysics. Being is central to the affirmative way of proceeding toward God. There is in Scotus no *via negativa* procedure that is comparable to that of Bonaventure's conclusion to the *Itinerarium mentis*[10] or informed

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[7] Scotus develops this insight in his *Prologue* to the *Ordinatio*, where he argues that human nature possesses a greater dignity in needing help for the fullest realization of its perfection. A being capable of self perfection is not as noble as one whose nature opens toward a transcendent perfection of which it is, alone, incapable. See *Ordinatio Prologue*, n. 75 in *Opera Omnia* (Civitas Vaticana, 1950), I, p. 46.

[8] See Aquinas's perspective on the need for the light of glory in *Summa Theologica*, Ia, 12, 2.

[9] Paul Vignaux has done extensive work on the role of *obiectum voluntarium* in Scotist thought. See his "Infini, liberté et histoire du salut" in *Deus et homo ad mentem I. Duns Scoti* (Rome, 1972), pp. 495–507.

[10] See chapter 7 of *The Journey of the Mind to God*, trans. P. Boehner, OFM and ed. Stephen Brown (Indianapolis, 1993), pp. 37–39; *Itin* (5.312a–313b).

by Maimonides's critique of language.[11] What the human mind can understand about the created order is the foundation upon which it reasons to and understands divine being. All that exists reveals God.

Creation is the first step in the rational ascent to God. From being (*ab ente*) understood as that being which actually exists or can exist, the human mind moves to actual existence (*esse*) without qualification. The spiritual and rational journey of the Franciscan moves from actual existing beings (in the created order) to a grasp of that being whose existence is "true" or complete ("*verum esse . . . totum esse*"). As a metaphysical inquiry, the tractatus offers the link between finite and infinite being. Beginning with the most general notions of being *qua* being (based upon concrete experience), the philosopher discovers the existence of a unique being, absolutely prior to all other beings, pure act and infinite in its perfections.[12]

By placing the metaphysical inquiry of the Aristotelian and Avicennan tradition within the larger context of revelation, salvation history and the theophany to Moses, Scotus is laying the foundation for the connection he will later reveal between theology and philosophy. The *Tractatus de Primo Principio* is clearly a philosophical text, and develops according to a philosophical argumentation. It can certainly be read without reference to this opening prayer or to any prayer that appears within it. However, the situation of the philosophical reflection on being within a context of prayerful dialogue and meditation reveals Scotus's own position on the intricate relationship between philosophical reflection and spirituality, a relationship that is not familiar to contemporary philosophers or, for that matter, those interested in spirituality.

It is, nevertheless, the sort of relationship that one finds in Anselm's *Monologion and Proslogion*. Here is the tradition of *fides quaerens intellectum*, of faith seeking understanding. Yet in Scotus the relationship appears in its most delicate balance, where the rational powers are not looking for divine illumination or supernatural assistance. Rather,

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[11] For example, in *The Guide to the Perplexed* Book I, chs. 51–60. An English translation can be found in *Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. A. Hyman and J. Walsh (Indianapolis, 1983), pp. 373–390.

[12] Similar structural arguments can be found in Avicenna's *Metaphysics* I, 6–7. English text can be found in *Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, pp. 241–245. This argumentational structure also appears in the third way of Aquinas's Five Ways argument (*ST* Ia, 2, 3.).

they seek only to avoid any needless philosophical error or rational false step. Scotus's *via affirmativa* is both affirmative of the order of creation as the first step toward understanding God, and affirmative of the powers of human reason in taking that journey of intellectual ascent through the orders of being, to arrive at last at infinite being, the fullness of being, the truest and most perfect being. This journey does not dispense with the act of divine self-revelation, because at the level of *ens infinitum* (or infinite being) one has not yet crossed the threshold from the realm of philosophical speculation to that of revelation. As we shall see later, the philosophical journey of understanding culminates in the affirmation of the existence of infinite being (*ens infinitum*). At that point the theological journey begins: as discovery, meditation and contemplation upon revelation, the nature of God, and divine actions in human history.

Rational Reflection upon Experience

We have identified both the personalist and affirmative elements within Scotus's understanding of the spiritual-rational ascent. Both elements are contextualized within the opening reference to divine theophany (Ex. 3:14) as a central act within salvation history. It is time to see where the uniquely rational element of Scotus's vision fits in. It appears first in the opening prayer of Chapter 2:

> In this chapter we offer arguments for the aforesaid fourfold division of order and for the interrelations that exist between essentially ordered terms.
>
> When the venerable doctor Augustine, writing about your triune self, declared (in the first book *On the Trinity*): "Nothing whatever begets itself," you, O Lord our God, were his infallible teacher. Have you not impressed upon us with equal certitude this similar truth? (First conclusion) *Nothing whatever is essentially ordered to itself.*[13]

This prayer concludes with a scientific truth about causality: that nothing causes itself. Scotus presents this truth as one that is also the result of a theophany, but a theophany of a particular sort. It is the Augustinian theophany of truth within the mind, truth that is discovered in and through the experience of reality.

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[13] *Treatise*, 2.1–2.2, p. 14.

As we saw earlier, the first chapter presented the biblical theophany to Moses as a central event within the history of salvation. Here, too, the second chapter offers another central event to the history of personal salvation. The two offer a parallel structure, a parallel discovery that is a beginning for all that follows. The divine self-revelation as being (Chapter 1) now appears as the divine self-revelation as truth (Chapter 2). But the truth here revealed is not the divine essence in the light of which all else is to be known. Scotus rejects this form of Augustinian illuminationism.[14] We do not know the world through God. Rather, we discover God by reflection upon the world in light of foundational principles of rationality. Specifically, in this case, we note the centrality of the principle of causality for our discovery of the rational order.

We know the world via the observation of natural and rational patterns. These patterns are those of cause and effect. This chapter opens with an inferential conclusion from the reflection on being that we saw in chapter one. The entirety of chapter two focuses on the ordering of causes. Aristotle's four causes are considered first: the formal and material causes; the efficient and final causes. Following this, Plato's order of eminence is also presented. The conclusions that result from chapter two are all conclusions about rational relationships of cause and effect. They are completely derived from Scotus's philosophical sources, Aristotle and Avicenna. They are completely grounded upon the certainty of order: a foundational truth of reason that Scotus takes from Augustine's *De Trinitate*.

A single, foundational truth begins the rational ascent. It is the first conclusion of the treatise. This first conclusion has to do with causality and the causal relationship within reality. It is based upon rational reflection upon experience of reality and so is a conclusion from a process of inferential reasoning (moving from effects to their cause). It is also the principle for what is to follow, grounding this chapter as well as the following chapters on logical grounds that now are woven into the fabric of the human experience. The complexity

[14] This sort of position would have been that of Henry of Ghent, against whose neo-Augustinian epistemology Scotus was critical. See Mary Beth Ingham and Mechthild Dreyer, *The Philosophical Vision of John Duns Scotus: An Introduction* (Washington, 2004), pp. 22–51.

of being (Chapter 1) is understood and analyzed through the five different causal perspectives (Chapter 2).

As Scotus moves through the reflection upon causality within this chapter, he makes use of the logical principle of non-contradiction to derive each conclusion from what has gone before. The structure of the chapter resembles a geometric reflection upon principles and the conclusions that would necessarily flow from them, according to the logical analysis known as *reductio ad absurdam*. According to this method of analysis, the truth of conclusions are seen in the impossibility of their opposites. If a consideration of the form *A or not-A* can be analyzed into each of its parts, and if one of the parts (let's say *not-A*) leads to an impossible or contradictory conclusion, then *A* must be true. From a logical standpoint, this is a very powerful rational form of argumentation.

Within this chapter, Scotus demonstrates the superiority of final causality. He shows how each causal perspective is related to the others, and how all are directed toward an ultimate end. Among the four of this treatise, chapter 2 is the most formal of them all, offering the rational structure of causal patterns and the rational method of reflection upon experience. It is an abstract meditation on the nature of human reasoning about experience. It is also a meditation on the rationality of all human experience, based upon the foundational rational pattern of logical and causal relationships.

The Spiritual Journey as Rational

From this brief reflection upon chapter two and its opening prayer, we discover a third element of Scotus's spiritual vision. The journey of the mind is not merely a psychological examination of experience. It is fully rational and fully grounded upon the deepest principles of logic. These principles frame reality and its relationship of causal patterns. They also frame human meditation upon the patterns. The entire journey has been pre-figured, as it were, within the first two chapters of the *Tractatus de Primo Principio*. Both chapters have presented the elements of the journey: being and the mind. Both being and the mind are rationally constituted. Causality and causal patterns appear within both. The isomorphic structure of reflection and reality in Scotist thought means that our rational con-

cepts do indeed "map" the world outside our mind: a world that we experience daily.[15]

We have now three elements that characterize Scotus's attitude toward prayer: that it is an affirmative, interpersonal and rational journey. The journey of prayer begins with the created order and the human encounter with what exists. This journey is possible because of the rational constitution of reality as patterns to be recognized. These patterns are causal in nature and are themselves matter for human consideration.

The Rational Demonstration of the Existence of a First Principle

Chapter 3 contains the philosophical heart of the *Tractatus* and is itself framed by two prayers. In the first, Scotus appeals for divine assistance in the scientific demonstration he is about to undertake. This demonstration is complex, for it seeks to integrate the three orders of Platonic and Aristotelian causality: the order of eminence, efficiency and finality.

> O Lord, our God, you have proclaimed yourself to be the first and last. Teach your servant to show by reason what he holds by faith most certain, that you are the most eminent, the first efficient and the last end.[16]

This brief prayer offers a structural mirror of the rational-spiritual insight. There is a truth of revelation: that God is first and last, Alpha and Omega (Rev. 1:17). This truth is now used in a rational exercise of demonstration. In other words, the centerpiece of this *Tractatus* in Chapter 3 is not the demonstration of divine existence to a non-believer. Rather it is the rational manifestation of the truth of what the believer holds "by faith most certain." It is faith, and not reason that is the locus of the believer's certainty. It is this initial certainty (in Chapter 3) that guides the reflection, not on the

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[15] See Allan B. Wolter, "The Formal Distinction" in *the Philosophical Theology of John Duns Scotus*, ed. Marilyn M. Adams (Ithaca, 1990), pp. 27–41.

[16] *Treatise*, 3.2, p. 42.

basis of one causal order, but on the convergence of the three (efficient, final, and eminent).

What is sought in Chapter 3 is the culmination of the ascent. This culmination involves the demonstration of two distinct truths: first, that the first principle exists and second, that the three causal orders presented in Chapter 2 argue independently to the existence of the same being. The triple primacy is the goal of the chapter, not simply the existence of the first principle.

Scotus develops the central argument for the existence of the first principle from the basis of efficient causality, taking as the first conclusion "Some nature among beings can produce an effect." This first conclusion is significant insofar as it results from the reflection on the essential orders of Chapter 2 and because it begins with the order of efficient causality. If rational reflection upon experience reveals the causal pattern, then this pattern of cause/effect has consequences. From the recognition of the actual existence of a contingent being, one that can be or not be, we proceed to the recognition of a cause for that being. In the case of this contingent being, the relationship of cause/effect is actual, because we have recognized a being that in fact exists but is not the cause of its own existence. The actuality of this relationship allows us to acknowledge its possibility, since if it were impossible, it could not be actual. We begin here an analytic reduction from experience into the metaphysical requirements for that experience. An actually existing being had to have been possible. If it were not, it could not have come into being. While a merely possible being might never become actual, the actual existence of a being points to its logically prior possibility. Scotus reasons not from possibility to actuality (this would be fallacious), but from actuality to possibility. Any actual being, understood according to its possibility, could be called an "effectible" (that is, a being capable of existing or being the effect of a cause).

The Journey of Rational Discovery

The metaphysical realm of possible being is discovered when we reflect upon beings that exist and upon the conditions needed for their actual existence. From the possibility of effectability (that is, of a being whose existence is the effect of a cause), Scotus moves to the possibility of causability. The possible effect would require a

being who possesses the capacity to cause other beings. At this level, Scotus notes, we enter the realm of modality, of possibility and necessity. We have discovered and entered this realm from that of actual contingent existence, so we are not guilty of faulty reasoning. On the basis of the cause/effect relationship, we have identified an effect that actually exists. We have also noted that such an effect is possible. We are focusing not on its actual existence, but upon the possibility of its existence. We have simply taken a metaphysical step into a realm where reasoning is actually much stronger and does not need to rely upon contingent events. It will be from the perspective of this metaphysical reflection that Scotus demonstrates the existence of a first in the order of efficient causality. Once he has done this, he turns to show how the orders of finality and eminence are similarly able to show the existence of a first.

But what interests us here is the prayer, and how the prayer sets up the work for the rational discovery of the domain beneath experience. Scotus's highly sophisticated metaphysical reflection begins from within two sets of reasoning: the first, revelation, the second, everyday experience. Chapters 1 and 2 now appear as prelude to this more abstract reflection on reality and its relationship to God. Chapter 1 highlighted divine revelation, and the "naming" of God as being. Here in Chapter 3, divine naming is now "Alpha and Omega". Chapter 2 pointed to the relational pattern of order in reality. Here in Chapter 3, that pattern now reveals a metaphysical sub-structure that (ultimately) will unite the two major philosophical traditions, Aristotle and Plato. Chapter 3 offers a stage of integration, both in the identification of the causal traditions and their demonstration of the existence of a first principle, but also in the earlier insights about God and reality. From the vantage point of Chapter 3, Chapter 1 is seen as a necessary but incomplete first step insofar as it reveals something of the divine nature. But Chapter 2 is also understood to be incomplete (in light of Chapter 3) in the way that the philosophical traditions appeared there as independent ways of reasoning. Now they are seen to be converging ways of demonstration. The intellectual ascent moves toward greater depth, complexity and integration.

Scotus demonstrates that a first being exists according to three separate orders of rational reflection. In addition, he demonstrates that the three orders are distinct ways of arguing toward the existence of one single being. What once appeared as three independent

philosophical traditions now emerges as a single three-fold proof. Scotus has both demonstrated something about the First Principle and something about philosophical reasoning. Chapter 3 concludes with a prayer, as Chapters 1 and 2 did not:

> Indeed, O Lord, in wisdom you have made things so ordered that any reasonable intellect may see that every being is ordered. Consequently, it was absurd for the philosophers to deny order of some. From the universal statement "Every being is ordered," then, it follows that not every being is posterior and not every being is prior, since in either case an identical thing would be ordered to itself or else a circle in the ordered would be assumed. Consequently there is some prior being which is not posterior, and is therefore first. And there is some posterior being which is not prior. But nothing exists which is neither prior nor posterior. You are the unique first, and everything besides you comes after you by reason of a threefold order, as I have explained to the best of my ability.[17]

Not only have Aristotle and Plato been brought together in the common affirmation of the existence of a first principle, but the entire structure of rational reflection on causality (in its three forms of efficient, final and eminent causes) has been shown to hold the key to understanding revelation. God's self revelation as first and last (alpha and omega) is now seen to be the fulfillment of the philosophical effort to prove the existence of a first efficient cause, a final cause and a most perfect being. Scotus states "Consequently, there is some prior being which is not posterior and is therefore first." Here is the confirmation of the divine name *Alpha*. He continues, "And there is some posterior being which is not prior." Here is confirmation of the divine name *Omega*. This philosophical effort to affirm the existence of a first cause was the metaphysical goal of all rational inquiry about reality.

Scotus also now attributes these names to God. Whereas God had predicated Being of divinity (in Chapter 1), human reason now predicates First and Last of God. For the Franciscan, this goal of demonstrating divine existence is partially (but only formally) achieved within philosophical reflection. It is completely achieved when we read revelation against the background of rational reflection. It is understood most fully when revelation illuminates reflection and reflection grounds revelation.

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[17] *Treatise*, 3.63, p. 70.

This is not a small insight. It is Scotus's perspective on the way reason and faith form a continuum of discovery and meditation, moving from contingent reality to God. The perspective involves both linear and circular reflection. In its linear structure, the pattern of reflection is that of discovery, moving from effect to cause. In its circular structure, the pattern of reflection is meditative, moving from revelation (divine self naming) to rational reflection (patterns that confirm the truth of what is believed and deepen our understanding of our faith) to assent that is the fruit of reasoning and belief.

Prayer as the Intricate Weave of Faith seeking Understanding

Here then is the fifth element of Scotus's rational and spiritual vision. Faith requires meditative reflection. The faith of the intellectual requires deep metaphysical speculation. This speculation does not destroy faith. On the contrary, it reveals the deeper formal structure upon which the coherency of revelation depends. At the end of the day for Scotus, revelation involves elements of mystery beyond the human mind's ability to grasp, but for the most part, revelation is grounded upon the rational foundations of logic and causal patterns.

The Rational Affirmation of Divine Perfections

As we have seen, chapter 3 demonstrates the existence of the first principle according to a triple causal primacy. In some ways, once the existence of God has been demonstrated, one might argue that the role of natural reason has reached its goal. The *Tractatus* could end with that. For Scotus and other scholastics, however, there are a few more aspects of the divine being that lie within the purview of rational reflection. For the Franciscan, these are the perfections of simplicity, infinity and rationality (implying both an intellect and will). The fourth chapter of *De Primo Principio* is devoted to the demonstration of these perfections.

It is important to note here that the demonstration of these perfections depends upon the already demonstrated existence of the first principle, or God. In contrast to later philosophical attempts to

demonstrate divine existence on the basis of divine infinity,[18] Scotus demonstrates divine infinity on the basis of divine existence. Therefore, no part of his demonstration of God's existence depends upon these perfections. For this reason, Scotus does not present an ontological argument for God's existence: one that depends either upon the definition of God or upon a perfection attributed to God. The proof in this text is a demonstration *quia*, or on the basis of effects. Once God's existence can be shown on the basis of the Aristotelian and Platonic causal proofs seen in chapter 3, we can consider what perfections would rationally belong to such a first being. This is the project for chapter 4.

A surprising aspect of this chapter is the number of times Scotus interjects prayer into his meditative demonstration. There are four prayer moments within the chapter: one at the outset (4.2), one immediately prior to the proofs for divine infinity (4.46), one immediately after the affirmation of divine simplicity (4.84–86), and a final prayer that concludes both the fourth chapter and the entire treatise (4.94). Each prayer is adapted to the specific moment of the argument.

The First Prayer: The Appeal for Divine Aid

> O Lord, our God, if you would grant me that favor, I would like to show somehow (*aliqualiter*) those perfections which I do not doubt are in your unique and truly first nature. I believe that you are simple, infinite, wise and endowed with a will. And as I wish to avoid a [vicious] circle in the proofs, I shall begin with certain conclusions about simplicity which can be proved at the outset. The other remarks about simplicity I shall defer until we come to the proper place where they can be proved.[19]

Two points of note appear here: the desire to demonstrate what is already held without doubt and the wish to avoid question begging (circularity of argument). Both define quite clearly the sort of rational project Scotus has engaged in from the outset. Both belong to the rational project of the believer. He already holds these attributes to belong to the first principle, so he is not seeking to convince

[18] As, for instance, Descartes's *Meditations*.
[19] *Treatise*, 4.2, p. 74.

himself of the truth of propositions about divine perfections. He is seeking to demonstrate their *reasonability*, that is, their knowability on the basis of natural reason. Scotus himself notes the tentative nature of success he envisions here. He asks for help to show *somehow* or in some sense (*aliqualiter*), the truth of what he believes. This level of demonstration is not as complete as that of Chapter 3, where the existence of the first principle is completely and adequately demonstrated, not just according to one order of causality, but according to three. Here in Chapter 4, the goal is muted.

The Second Prayer: The Affirmation of Infinite Being

The second prayer occurs between the eighth and ninth conclusions. In the eighth conclusion, Scotus affirms that the intellect of the first being knows all things with a knowledge that is perfect and prior by nature to what exists. In the ninth conclusion, he infers from this that the first being is infinite. Between the two we find this prayer:

> Oh the depths of the riches of your wisdom and of your knowledge, O God, by which you comprehend everything that can be known! Could you not enable my puny intellect to infer that *you are infinite and incomprehensible by what is finite? (Ninth conclusion)*
>
> I shall try now to establish this most fertile conclusion, which if it had been proved of you at the outset, would have made obvious so many of the conclusions we have mentioned so far. I shall first try to prove your infinity, if you please, from what has already been said about your intellect. And I shall then bring up other arguments to see whether or not they entail the conclusion we propose to prove.[20]

Here we find an inference, not a demonstration, thus a less certain form of proof. We also note the reference to a puny human intellect (*intellectui meo parvo*), recalling to mind the opening prayer of Chapter 1, where Scotus noted the limitation of human cognition. We are now at a conclusion that affirms both the perfection of divine being and the inability of the human mind to grasp that same perfection. This "most fertile conclusion" of divine infinity explains everything else in such a way that, had we been able to prove it sooner, the treatise would have been much shorter!

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[20] *Treatise*, 4.46–4.47, p. 102.

Note also the way in which the infinity of divine being is inferred from the activity of the divine intellect in knowing all that exists. Scotus moves easily from the affirmation of an infinity of "things to be known" to the fact of their being known. From this he affirms the necessary existence of an intellect that can know them and from there to the nature of the being whose intellect is infinite. A being with an intellect capable of knowing an infinite number of beings must itself be infinite.

Scotus then offers seven ways of demonstrating the infinity of the first principle, of which the fifth he calls a "touching up" (*coloratio*) of Anselm's famous argument for the existence of God. At the close of these, he prepares for the affirmation of divine unicity, now the last perfection that remains. He does this by means of a prayer that forms the bridge between the philosophical conclusions.

The Third Prayer: The Shift from Infinite Being to Divine Unicity

At the outset of the third prayer, Scotus begins with a metaphysical reflection. In this first meditation, he re-traces the journey of the treatise. He revisits the series of divine attributes that have led us to this point: from the triple causal primacy to immutability and necessity.

> O Lord our God, Catholics can infer most of the perfections which philosophers knew of you from what has been said. You are the first efficient cause, the ultimate end, supreme in perfection, transcending all things. You are uncaused in any way and therefore incapable of becoming or perishing; indeed it is simply impossible that you should not exist for of yourself you are necessary being.[21]

This was the work of Chapter 3, where the three philosophical trajectories: efficient causality, final causality and eminent causality were seen to conclude all to the same affirmation of a necessarily existing first principle. Next, Scotus moves from necessity to eternity:

> You are therefore eternal, because the span of your existence is without limit and you experience it all at once for it cannot be strung out in a succession of events. For there can be no succession save in what

[21] *Treatise*, 4.84, p. 142.

> is being continually caused or at least in what is dependent for its existence upon another, and this dependence is a far cry from what has necessary being of itself.[22]

There follows a reflection on the shift from eternity to nobility, rationality and happiness:

> You live a most noble life, because you are understanding and volition. You are happy, indeed you are by nature happiness, because you are in possession of yourself. You are the clear vision of yourself and the most joyful love, and although you are most self-sufficient and happy in yourself alone, you still understand in a single act everything that can be known.[23]

The nobility and happiness of divine being is derived from the capacity for understanding and desire. In other words, the first principle is a personal being, since only personal beings are rational and self-aware, having a clear vision of themselves. This clear vision is tied to a joyful love. Here the first being possesses the ideal of philosophical completeness and perfection: autarchia (self-possession or independence). From the affirmation of this self-sufficient happiness, Scotus returns to a reflection on divine power, infinity and simplicity:

> At one and the same time you possess the power to freely and contingently will each thing that can be caused and by willing it through your volition to cause it to be. Most truly then you are of infinite power. You are incomprehensible, infinite, for nothing omniscient or of infinite power is finite, nor supreme among beings. Neither is the ultimate end, nor what exists of itself in all simplicity, something finite. You are the ultimate in simplicity, having no really distinct parts, or no realities in your essence which are not really the same.[24]

The divine perfections now appear to be re-affirmations of one another. The move in this reflection is no longer a sequence of linear inferences, but of a circular return to perfections that are justifications of one another. In the last portion of this metaphysical meditation, we move from simplicity to immutability and perfection:

> In you no quantity, no accident can be found, and therefore you are incapable of accidental change, even as I have already expressed, you are in essence immutable. You alone are simply perfect, not just a

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[22] *Treatise*, 4.84, p. 142.
[23] *Treatise*, 4.84, p. 144.
[24] *Treatise*, 4.84, p. 144.

> perfect angel, or a perfect body, but a perfect being, lacking no entity it is possible for anything to have. Nothing can formally possess every entity but every entity can exist in something either formally or eminently, as it does in you, O God, who are supreme among beings, the only one of them who is infinite.[25]

Finally, the metaphysical reflection concludes with the affirmation of goodness and generosity, the ultimate object of all desire: the first principle is also last end.

> Communicating the rays of your goodness most liberally, you are boundless good, to whom as the most lovable thing of all every single being in its own way comes back to you as to its ultimate end.[26]

The first phase of this extended meditation has focused on the metaphysical attributes of the first being. It echoes the reflection in Chapter 1, but in a far more sophisticated manner. Tracing out the major stages, the reflection has moved from the affirmation of the first efficient cause to the final cause. The causal circle is once again complete. Efficiency reveals necessity of being, necessity points to infinity, infinity to nobility, nobility to self-possession, self-possession to goodness and goodness to the ultimate end. The series of attributes unfolds as the meditation moves toward completeness. It is also a type of meditative discovery, where each attribute is disclosed by reflective meditation upon an earlier attribute. Here too, we see the circularity of reflection from discovery to meditation (Chapters 1–3) and from meditation to discovery (Chapter 4). What is discovered in this fourth chapter, however, points to the theological journey. Thus does natural reflection reveal its own spiritual transcendence. It is indeed a pity that Scotus did not complete the second treatise he intended, *De Creditis*.

The second phase of meditation upon metaphysical attributes involves philosophical patterns of reflection. Here we begin, not with causality, but with truth. This portion of the text echoes the reflection of Chapter 2 and its focus on rational ordering. In this segment, Scotus seems to link his own philosophical meditation to the Greek philosophical tradition of Plato and, specifically, to the role of Platonic ideas in the foundation of the judgment of truth. Just as the divine being is the metaphysical foundation for all that exists, so too divine being is truth itself.

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[25] *Treatise*, 4.84, p. 144.
[26] *Treatise*, 4.84, p. 144.

> You alone are the first truth. Indeed the false is not what it seems to be. Hence something besides itself is the basis for what it appears to be, for were its nature alone the basis, it would appear to be what it really is. But for you there is no other ground or basis for what appears, because in your essence which is first apparent to yourself all things appear, and by that very fact nothing subsequent is the basis for what appears to you. In that essence, I say, whatever can be known in all the fullness of its meaning is present to your intellect. You are then truth in all its splendor, infallible truth, comprehending every intelligible truth with certainty.[27]

This truth is simplicity itself, holding all else within it:

> For the other things apparent to you do not seem to exist in you in such a way that they deceive you simply because they appear in you. For the ground or reason for the appearance does not prevent the proper meaning of what it reveals from appearing to your intellect as is the case with our visual deceptions, when the appearance of something else prevents us from seeing what is really there. This is not so in your intellect; quite the contrary, so perfect in its clarity is the vision of your essence that whatever is displayed therein appears to you in all its proper meaning.[28]

The divine being is now identical to the divine mind, capable of immediate and certain grasp of all that is and of its "proper meaning." The act of this mind is immediate, and does not know reality through platonic ideas.

> For my purposes there is no need to treat at greater length the subject of your truth or of the ideas in you. Much indeed has been said about the ideas, but even were it never said, indeed, were the ideas never mentioned, no less will be known of your perfection. This is clear because your essence is the perfect ground for knowing each and every thing that can be known to the extent that it can be known. He who wishes may call this an idea, but here I do not care to dwell further upon the Greek and Platonic word.[29]

Finally, Scotus refers to another treatise, one that he (apparently) never authored, in which he intended to discuss directly other attributes that are more properly considered from within the domain of faith.

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[27] *Treatise*, 4.85, pp. 144–145.
[28] *Treatise*, 4.85, p. 146.
[29] *Treatise*, 4.85, p. 146.

> Besides the aforesaid points which the philosophers have affirmed of you, Catholics often praise you as omnipotent, immense, omnipresent, just yet merciful, provident of all creatures but looking after intellectual ones in a special way, but these matters are deferred to the next tract. In this first treatise I have tried to show how the metaphysical attributes affirmed of you can be inferred in some way by natural reason. In the tract which follows, those shall be set forth that are the subject of belief, wherein reason is held captive—yet to Catholics, the latter are the more certain since they rest firmly upon your own most solid truth and not upon our intellect which is blind and weak in many things.[30]

There remains only the final affirmation: that of divine unicity. Such a being who possesses all the attributes discussed thus far must itself be the only one of its kind. Given the existence of this first principle which is necessary, and the attribute of infinity that belongs to this being, one can only conclude the following: Numerically, there can only be one infinite intellect, one infinite will, one infinite power, one necessary being, and one infinite goodness. Scotus himself claims that this is the finishing touch of this work, since it does not lie beyond reason to prove that there is one and only one of such a being.

The Final Prayer of Praise

Once he has shown the five ways of demonstrating divine unicity, Scotus comes to the end of the treatise. There is but one final prayer:

> O Lord our God! You are one in nature. You are one in number. Truly have you said that besides you there is no God. For though many may be called gods or thought to be gods, you alone are by nature God. You are the true God from whom, in whom and through whom all things are; you are blessed forever. Amen![31]

His treatise concludes with a prayer of praise for all that has been demonstrated. In this litany of attributes we understand more deeply than at the outset of the *Tractatus* what it means for God to say "I am Who am."

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[30] *Treatise*, 4.86, p. 146.
[31] *Treatise*, 4.94, p. 150.

Significance of the *Tractatus de Primo Principio*

As we consider more carefully the significance of this work as exemplary of Franciscan prayer, let us recall the elements we have identified. These are five:

1. That prayer is an interpersonal dialogue (rather than a monologue or personal meditation).
2. That the spiritual ascent is an affirmative journey (rather than *via negativa*).
3. That the spiritual ascent is framed by rational canons (rather than an affective journey leading ultimately beyond rational discourse).
4. That the ascent begins with an experience of the contingent order (rather than an experience of God).
5. That divine aid is required at critical moments, particularly as one ascends to a sustained meditation on the nature of God.

What is significant among these five is the way the first and last point to the human-divine interaction of dialogue and aid. Scotus asks for God's help and receives it. Prayer is not only an exercise of praise (as occurs in the final chapter), but is itself part of the intellectual-spiritual journey from the world to God. In the request for help, the human mind sees its own limits and realizes the extent to which, without grace, it cannot be all that it has been created to be. This limitation of human performance is not dismissed by God. Divine compassion responds to the rational call for help, sustaining the rational ascent as far as possible. Throughout this ascent, nature and grace are interwoven.

In the other three elements, we see the commitment to the contingent order and to the dignity of human rational capacity that is part of the Franciscan affirmation of this world. Scotus distinguishes himself as a Franciscan with his exceedingly strong affirmation of human rational powers. Here is clearly a Franciscan intellectual, affirming the dignity of the created order, in its natural and rational manifestation. Human reflection upon experience of nature is the starting point of any journey toward God.

Let us reflect for a moment on what could be seen as distinctive characteristics of Scotus's text, especially surprising in light of its Franciscan authorship. First, there does not appear to be any affective or poetic dimension to the ascent. It is a rational reflection, a meditation upon reality that is highly abstract. When seen in contrast to

Bonaventure's *Itinerarium*, it appears overly speculative and dry. The final prayer may be effusive, in comparison to what has preceded it, but even that is brief. The progression of the text, along with the prayer is more proper to a mathematician than to a Franciscan.

This aspect of the text is most certainly true. Indeed, no one could ever accuse Scotus of getting carried away by his emotions! However, it is perhaps just this dimension that illustrates the variety of spiritual intuitions that the tradition includes. Franciscan prayer is not only poetic and affective. There is a rational experience of beauty, the beauty of order that belongs to the Franciscan tradition. This experience is not separate from prayer, but is itself intricately woven into the fabric of life. Franciscan thinkers such as Scotus do not separate their rational reflection from their spiritual life. The two go hand in hand. Indeed, the success of their rational and scientific inquiry depends upon their spiritual practice. The work of the fourth Chapter depends upon the continued appeal for divine aid, and reflection as a sustained dialogue with God.

Another concern might be the way in which this *Tractatus* can be seen as emblematic of the spiritual journey broadly conceived, but not the specifically Christian journey. There is no reference to the Trinity, to the Incarnation or to any particularly strong element that would belong to a Franciscan. The treatise ends with the affirmation of monotheism, not with the affirmation of any truth proper to Christianity.

Here again, this is true. Scotus himself postpones to the second treatise *De Creditis* (never authored) key divine attributes such as omnipotence, omnipresence, providence, justice and mercy. He clearly states that these attributes of God belong to the domain of faith "where reason is held captive." So, while he acknowledges that there is a dimension of divine nature that lies beyond the capacity of natural reason, he does not give us any evidence as to how he would deal with these attributes, either as simply given by faith, or as conclusions that can be demonstrated, but only with the help of scriptural texts.

If we were to highlight the phases of the spiritual journey according to Scotus, they might be those of discovery, meditation and praise. The initial phase of discovery belongs to natural reasoning about beings that exist. This phase opens toward a meditative reflection upon patterns of experience and causal relationships. This phase points toward a new, deeper discovery of the metaphysical under-

pinnings of everyday experience, according to a series of inferential insights. Further meditation on the conclusions reached at this level reveals the convergence of philosophical reasoning and the integration of diverse traditions around a single first principle. The linear pattern reaches its end.

But here begins the circular pattern. Here, the central point is not discovery but meditation. Meditation reveals multiple attributes, and so another type of discovery flows from meditative reflection. Divine attributes are contained within one another, and unfold as human reason reflects upon them in a sustained, logical process. At this point, praise begins to emerge as a developing thematic.

Scotus's preference for praise, and indeed for the multiplication of language about God at the end of the *Treatise* is a marked contrast to the Augustinian and Bonaventurian tradition. Whereas these two great spiritual masters ended their journey in silence, Scotus ends his with shouts of praise. His is no mystical night; we enter rather the mystical day. It is a mysticism of *praxis*, not of *theoria*; it is action, not contemplation that completes the spiritual journey for Scotus.

So what, finally, are we to make of the *Tractatus* as a text reflective of Franciscan spirituality? How might we best understand the prayerful trajectory of the Subtle Doctor and its significance for our understanding of Franciscan prayer? It seems that the dialogic beginning and ending, the move from few words to many words, underscore the theme of *sacred commerce* that is prayer for Scotus. It is first and foremost a communication, an uttering of the word. This is perhaps the best expression of the nature of prayer for Scotus. An yet, the uttering of the word, is precisely what happened at the moment of creation when God said "Let there be light" and there was light. It is the way in which the medievals understood the generation of the second person of the trinity (as word). Finally, it is the way John's Gospel speaks of the Incarnation: "And the Word became flesh." In words, and even in his wordiness, Scotus affirms the most significant Franciscan commitments: that God is Creator, that God's nature is triune, and that God has become incarnate. Subtly woven and even more subtly expressed, Scotus's Franciscan intuitions belong to the fabric of this text as expressive of his attitude toward prayer. The final prayerful experience is not the silence of the mystic, but the joyful praise of the lover. True to his Franciscan identity, Scotus never leaves this world, but takes it along with him into the highest realm of loving communion with God.

MYSTICISM, ORTHODOXY AND POLEMICS

ANGELA OF FOLIGNO'S SPIRAL PATTERN OF PRAYER

Diane V. Tomkinson

Introduction

Sometime in the final decades of the thirteenth century, a widowed lay penitent named Angela made a pilgrimage from her native town of Foligno to the basilica of St. Francis in nearby Assisi. The events of this pilgrimage led to a literary collaboration between the woman named Angela and various Franciscan friars who recorded her mystical experiences and teaching in a collection of texts known as the *Liber* or Book of Angela of Foligno.[1] Some seven hundred years later, Angela's book continues to offer a distinctive expression of a Franciscan relational theology and spirituality that can enter into fruitful dialogue with contemporary insights and needs.

The *Memorial* is the longest and most autobiographical of the *Liber*'s texts. It was written down in Latin by a single Franciscan friar, who served as translator, scribe and editor for Angela's dictated vernacular account of her spiritual life. The resulting text depicts Angela's life of prayer through diverse extrinsic and intrinsic patterns. Close study of the *Memorial* indicates that the numerical patterns of sequentially ordered steps, which structure its narrative, reflect the editorial influence of Angela's friar scribe, while the intrinsic pattern of Angela's mysticism is better described as a spiral.

Previous scholars who have remarked upon the spiral quality of Angela's mysticism include Antonio Blasucci, Giovanni Benedetti, and Paul Lachance, O.F.M.; however, none of their studies comprehensively explored the spiraling dynamic within Angela's texts.[2]

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[1] *Memorial* Prologue 20, p. 128, in *Il Libro della Beata Angela da Foligno (edizione critica)*, eds. Ludgar Thier, O.F.M. and Abele Calufetti, O.F.M. (Grottaferrata, 1985).

[2] See Antonio Blasucci, *Il cristocentrismo nella vita spirituale secondo la B. Angela da Foligno* (Rome, 1940), p. 208; Giovanni Benedetti, "Elementi per una teologia spirituale nel *Libro* della Beata Angela," in *Vita e Spiritualità della Beata Angela da Foligno: Atti del convegno di studi per il VII centenario della conversione della Beata Angela da Foligno (1285–1985), Foligno 11–14 dicembre 1985*, ed. P. Clément Schmitt, O.F.M. (Perugia, 1987), p. 29; Paul Lachance, O.F.M., "Introduction," *Angela of Foligno: Complete Works*

The present essay examines the extrinsic and intrinsic patterns of the *Memorial* as crucial evidence toward better understanding the Trinitarian mysticism of this medieval Franciscan woman and its potential contemporary significance. Angela's mystical path diverged from both medieval and contemporary patterns of hierarchical ascent to an originating divine person or monistic absorption into a primordial divine unity. She imaged divine and created reality in spiraling circles of dynamic mutual relationship that simultaneously intensify and expand, as they move in the Holy Spirit, through profound identification with the crucified Christ, into the very midst of the Trinity. Angela's spiral pattern of prayer articulated a dynamic consciousness of mystical communion among herself, the Triune God and all creation in which unity and distinction coincide.

The image of a spiral integrates the forward momentum of Angela's spiritual journey with the oscillating quality of her repeated swings between desolation and consolation. Neither the repetitive motion of a pendulum, the closed perfection of a circle, nor the ascending lines of a ladder adequately symbolize the complex interweaving of cyclical and progressive elements within Angela's mysticism. The open circles of a three-dimensional spiral better express the relational dynamism of Angela's spirituality: although she frequently described similar experiences, insights and emotions, they continually increased in both intensity and scope. Her spiraling movement in the Holy Spirit, through Christ, into the Trinity recurs and intensifies throughout the *Memorial*; these experiences of intensifying communion with the infinite All Good simultaneously draw the mystic into a fuller knowledge of herself and into expanding circles of relationship with the natural world, her immediate circle of spiritual companions, and the wider community of the Church both on earth and in heaven. Angela's mystical path is thus both intensively and extensively progressive. Like a powerful hurricane or tornado, the mystical spiral is in continual movement, intensifying even as it expands.

(New York, 1993), p. 73; idem, *The Spiritual Journey of the Blessed Angela of Foligno According to the Memorial of Frater A.*, (Rome, 1984), p. 210.

Angela of Foligno and her Texts

We derive our knowledge of the medieval woman known as Angela of Foligno almost exclusively from the *Memorial* and the *Instructions*, the primary constituent texts of the *Liber*. The *Memorial* presents itself as a kind of spiritual diary dictated by Angela to her Franciscan confessor. The *Instructions* are an assortment of letters, brief treatises, vision narratives, and hagiographical accounts, which are variously transcribed, compiled or composed by an unknown number of anonymous scribes. The complicated manuscript history of the *Liber* includes a shorter and longer version of the *Memorial* and a shifting collection of *Instructions*, which vary in number and arrangement among the oldest manuscripts. The consensus of current scholarship is that the longer version of the *Memorial* represents the original edition of that text, while the collection of *Instructions* was gradually assembled between shortly before Angela's death in 1309 and the end of the fifteenth century.[3]

The transparency of the literary collaboration between the mystic and her scribes varies considerably across this range of texts. In the interest of space, the present essay will focus on Angela's spiral path as depicted in the *Memorial*, which provides more information about its process of composition than the *Liber*'s other texts. The *Instructions* generally confirm and even strengthen the impression that the diverse numerical patterns used to depict the forward momentum of Angela's spiritual path reflect the editorial influence of her scribal collaborators, while the spiral pattern of intensifying and expanding communion is more intrinsic to her spirituality.[4]

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[3] The oldest surviving manuscript of the *Liber* is Assisi, Biblioteca Comunale, 342, which Attilio Bartoli Langeli has dated to 1309. The most complete collection of *Instructions* is contained in Subiaco, Biblioteca Monastero S. Scolastica, 112, dated to 1496. For further details on the manuscript tradition of the *Liber,* see Thier and Calufetti, *Il Libro della Beata Angela*, pp. 51–87; Bartoli Langeli, "Il Codice di Assisi" in *Angèle de Foligno: Le Dossier*, ed. Giulia Barone and Jacques Dalarun (Rome, 1999), pp. 7–27; Dominique Poirel, "Le *Liber* d'Angèle de Foligno: Enquête sur un *Exemplar* disparu," *Revue d'Histoire des Textes* 32 (2002), 225–263; and Diane Tomkinson, "'In the Midst of the Trinity': Angela of Foligno's Trinitarian Theology of Communion" (Ph.D. diss., Fordham University, 2004), especially pp. 20–25 and 343–350.

[4] Readers interested in exploring the patterns of the *Memorial* and the *Instructions* in greater depth are directed to my recent doctoral dissertation, cited in the previous note, especially chapters four through seven; pp. 163–505.

The scribal editor of the *Memorial* provides a good deal of information about his role in the composition of this text. He describes himself as a Franciscan priest who is Angela's relative and confessor; most scholars identify him with the friar referred to as Brother A. in *Instruction XXVI*.[5] The "brother scribe" of the *Memorial* informs the reader that the text resulted from conversations between Angela and himself, in which she recounted her mystical experiences and subsequent reflections in her Umbrian dialect, while he translated and transcribed her words into written Latin form. Brother A. also indicates that he organized the text into its present structure of nine chapters, deleting and condensing some material but being careful not to add anything to Angela's words. He insists that he frequently read his version of the text back to her for her correction and approval, and sometimes incorporated her additional comments into the text.[6]

Although the *Memorial* is more concerned with Angela's inner life and spiritual teaching than with the details of her biography, it does provide a few minimal facts about the external circumstances of her life.[7] She lived in Foligno, on the Umbrian plain, during the last half of the thirteenth century. She was married and had an unspecified number of children. At some point during her married life, she was overwhelmed by a fear of damnation, triggered by guilt for an unconfessed mortal sin.[8] After praying to Saint Francis, the celebrated patron of nearby Assisi, for assistance in finding a good confessor,

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[5] *Memorial* 2.100–101, p. 168; *Instruction 26*.45–59, pp. 628–630.

[6] For Brother A's scattered comments on his role in the composition of the *Memorial*, see *Memorial* 1.33–8, p. 134; 1.304–311, p. 156; all of chapter 2, pp. 158–174; 7.8–17, p. 288; 8.9–15, p. 336; 8.113–121, p. 346; 9.170–174, p. 368; 9.240–9, p. 374; 9.495–532, pp. 398–400.

[7] The following biographical summary is drawn from data in the *Memorial*, especially Chapter 1.4–26, pp. 132–134; 1.76–95, pp. 136–138; 1.173–185, pp. 144–146; 1.256–311, pp. 152–156; 2.97–131, pp. 168–170; 3.5–128, pp. 176–186; 8.113–126, p. 346; 8.181–196, p. 352; 9.495–532, p. 400; and the following *Instructions: 4*.6–29, pp. 484–486; *5*.136–187, pp. 518–524; *36*.7–157, pp. 724–736; and the *Notificatio* 2–5, p. 738.

[8] M.J. Ferré suggests that Angela was born in 1248, married around 1268, and experienced her "conversion" around 1285. Jacques Dalarun points out that all of these dates are at best educated guesses deduced from scanty clues in the *Memorial*. See M.J. Ferré, "Les principales dates de la vie d'Angèle de Foligno," *Revue d'histoire franciscaine* 2 (1925), pp. 21–34; Jacques Dalarun, "Angèle de Foligno a-t-elle existé?" in *"Alla signorina": Mélanges offerts à Noëlle de la Blanchardière* (Rome, 1995), pp. 59–97.

Angela had a reassuring vision of the saint in a dream. She subsequently made a complete confession to the chaplain of the local bishop.

From this point of conversion, Angela began to live the recognized lifestyle of a medieval penitent, giving herself to the increasingly strict practice of prayer, asceticism, sexual continence and charitable activity. Her new penitential lifestyle caused conflict with her family, which was resolved by the sudden deaths of her mother, husband and children (perhaps in one or more of the recurring disasters that hit Foligno in the 1280s).[9] Freed by widowhood to pursue her ideals, Angela made her profession as a lay Franciscan penitent and devoted herself to a life of voluntary poverty, charitable activity and increasingly profound mystical prayer.[10]

Shortly after her profession, Angela made a pilgrimage on foot to nearby Assisi. During her journey, she had an intense mystical experience of the Trinity's presence within her. Her consciousness of this divine indwelling lasted through her arrival in Assisi and her initial prayers at the Basilica of St. Francis. Upon her second entrance into the basilica, this intense sense of Trinitarian presence was gently withdrawn, as the Holy Spirit had forewarned her. Angela was so distraught at this withdrawal of divine consolation that she could not control her grief.

> And then after this departure, I began to shriek loudly or cry out, and without any shame I shrieked and screamed saying these words, namely "Love not known, and why do you leave me so? But I was not able nor could I say more except that I was shouting without shame these words, namely "Love not known, and why and why and why?" Nevertheless, this cry was so caught in my throat that the words could not be understood.[11]

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[9] Mario Sensi reports an earthquake in 1279, Foligno's unsuccessful wars with Perugia in 1282–1283 and 1287–1289, a terrible windstorm in 1282 that destroyed crops and houses, and a three-year famine in 1282–1284. Illness or epidemic is also a possibility. "La B. Angela nel contesto religioso folignate" in *Vita e Spiritualità*, pp. 40, 45.

[10] *Memorial* 3.19–20, p. 178. It is uncertain whether Angela's profession of "the rule of blessed Francis" occurred before or after 1289, when Pope Nicholas IV promulgated a formal rule for the Franciscan Third Order of Penance. See Lachance, *Complete Works*, p. 34; Dalarun, "Angèle de Foligno a-t-elle existé?," pp. 63–65.

[11] "Et tunc post discessum coepi stridere alta voce vel vociferari, et sine aliqua verecundia stridebam et clamabam dicendo hoc verbum scilicet: Amor non cognitus, et quare scilicet me dimittis? Sed non poteram vel non dicebam plus nisi quod

Brother A. was among the many who witnessed this public display in the Basilica of St. Francis. The friar was mortified by the strange behavior of his kinswoman and ordered Angela to return to Foligno immediately. When Brother A. was reassigned to Foligno a year later, he demanded that she explain to him what had occurred. Thus began the writing of the *Memorial*, which the friar initially intended to submit to "some wise and spiritual man," for fear that Angela was under the influence of an evil spirit.[12] For some years thereafter, Angela and Brother A. collaborated in putting her experiences into written form.

The *Memorial* specifies that the final two-year period of its narrative, which included some of Angela's most profound mystical states, began just before the pontificate of Pope Celestine V, whose brief reign lasted from July to December of 1294.[13] Thus, by the mid 1290s, Angela was a mature, deeply mystical woman, actively collaborating with her Franciscan confessor in exploring and recording the meaning of her mystical experiences. Although she was criticized by some of her contemporaries, Angela became a revered spiritual teacher for other friars and penitents who gathered around her in the decade or so prior to her death on January 4, 1309.[14]

The majority of the *Instructions* were apparently addressed to individuals and groups within these expanding circles of relationship. Franciscan friars who looked to Angela as their spiritual mother preserved Brother A.'s text of the *Memorial* and collaborated in the creation, dispersion and eventual collection of the diverse *Instructions*.[15]

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clamabam sine verecundia praedictum verbum scilicet: Amore non cognitus, et quare et quare et quare? Tamen praedictum verbum ita intercludebatur a voce quot non intelligebatur verbum." *Memorial* 3.110–111, p. 184. All translations from the *Memorial* and the *Instructions* are my own; I have offered a literal, word for word translation as much as possible, so that the English reader may get a sense of the repetitions and other stylistic quirks of Brother A's Latin.

[12] "aliquem sapientem et spiritualem virum." *Memorial* 2.124–125, p. 170.

[13] *Memorial* 8.181–3, p. 352.

[14] Criticism reported in the *Memorial* includes the friars' initial objections to Angela and Brother A.'s collaboration, *Memorial* 2.156–157, p. 172; public speculation that she was possessed, *Memorial* 1.261–264, p. 152; and a reference to Angela's persecution by friars and penitents, *Memorial* 5.113–4, p. 240.

[15] Dalarun and Bartoli Langeli both argue that Assisi MS 342, containing the *Memorial* and twenty-eight *Instructions*, was being compiled by a Friar Minor in the convent attached to the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi, at the time of Angela's death in 1309. They hypothesize that the marginal notation of her death, which appears part way through *Instruction 2*, was written by the scribe upon hearing the news

Although they are beyond the boundaries of this study, the *Instructions* suggest that the mature Angela continued to experience a spiral path of prayer that drew her into ever intensifying communion with divine mystery, even as it called her into relationship with an expanding community of spiritual daughters and sons.

Patterning Angela's Prayer

Extrinsic Patterns

In describing the difficulties he encountered while writing down Angela's oral account of her mystical experiences, Brother A. reported that "I consider it to have been a divine miracle that what I wrote was written in an orderly way."[16] The friar added that if his own conscience was not in order when he visited Angela, his writing was equally disordered. Thus he made it a practice to go to confession before meeting with Angela, and considered it a grace if she responded in any ordered fashion to the questions that he asked of her.[17] Brother A. was clearly concerned that the *Memorial* should have a coherent structure. Yet there seemed to be something either about Angela's experiences or the friar's reception of her account of these experiences that resisted his efforts to discern within or impose upon them a meaningful pattern.

The struggle to discern or impose an intelligible pattern upon Angela's mystical encounters with the immediacy of divine mystery is part of the complex process of the *Memorial*'s composition. The first level of patterning implied in the text is Angela's own attempt to express, in vernacular speech and symbolic images, experiences that she repeatedly insisted were beyond linguistic or analogical description. The second level of reflection and patterning is the

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and that he subsequently ceased working on the manuscript. *Instruction 2* is the final text in this apparently incomplete codex; however, the process of collecting Angela's later writings apparently continued. Subsequent manuscripts gradually added to the collection, until the number of *Instructions* reached thirty-six, in addition to the death notice and an anonymous epilogue, in the late fifteenth century Subiaco MS 112. See Tomkinson, "In the Midst of the Trinity," pp. 343–350; Dalarun, "a-t-elle existe?," pp. 69–71; Bartoli Langeli, "Il Codice di Assisi" in *Le Dossier*, p. 15.

[16] "divinum miraculum existimo fuisse illa quae scripsi scribere ordinate." *Memorial* 2.157–158, p. 172.

[17] *Memorial* 2.161–167, pp. 172–174.

collaborative effort between Angela and her friar confessor that resulted in the written Latin text. Both levels are characterized by a spiraling repetitiveness, as Angela and Brother A. continually tried out alternative ways of expressing the inexpressible.

The texts of the *Liber* suggest a reciprocal process of extrapolating patterns of general spiritual development out of Angela's particular experiences and interpreting Angela's experiences in terms of familiar numerical patterns. The *Memorial* offers an initial pattern of thirty "steps or changes," which Brother A. subsequently revised into a pattern of seven "steps or revelations."[18] Toward the end of the fifth revelation, an extended reflection upon hospitality to the divine "Pilgrim" synthesizes Angela's experiences in terms of various "modes" by which the soul experiences, recognizes and welcomes the indwelling divine presence. Significantly, the text itself never numbers these "modes," although the subheading in the critical edition identifies seven.[19] Various *Instructions* offer still more numerical patterns, such as three transformations, six "signs of divine love," twelve "degrees of love" and seven gifts by which the soul is transformed into Christ.[20] Thus, diverse strands of the *Liber* exemplify a common tendency to identify and enumerate sequential stages along Angela's spiritual path.

The *Memorial*'s nine constituent chapters structure this text's interpretive shift from an initial extrinsic pattern of thirty to a revised pattern of seven. The first chapter begins by asserting that Angela, while in conversation with her *socia* (an anonymous maid and spiritual companion), recognized in herself "thirty steps or changes" experienced by the soul on "the way of penance."[21] However, this chapter presents only the initial nineteen of these changes, leading up to Angela's memorable encounter with the Triune God during her post-

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[18] "triginta passus vel mutationes." *Memorial* 1.4–6, p. 132; "VII passibus vel revelationibus." *Memorial* 2.14, p. 160.

[19] *Memorial* 7.273–415, pp. 312–324.

[20] *Instruction 2*.31–33, p. 412; *Instruction 4*.170–179, p. 500; *Instruction 28*, pp. 638–648; *Instruction 16*, p. 570; *Instruction 34*.56–65, p. 686; *Instruction 27*, pp. 632–636.

[21] "triginta passus vel mutationes . . . per viam paenitentiae." *Memorial* 1.4–6, p. 132. Although a pattern of thirty also appears in *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* by John Climacus, it is unclear whether this Greek classic was widely known in Umbrian Italy prior to its translation into Latin by Angelo Clareno sometime between 1300 and 1305 after the composition of the *Memorial*; see Joy Antoinette Schroeder, "Sacred Space and Sacred Time in the Religious Experience of Angela of Foligno" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1999), 38, n. 91.

profession pilgrimage to Assisi. At this point, Brother A. interrupted Angela's narrative to devote the second chapter of the *Memorial* to his own first person account of his editorial role, explaining how and why he introduced a new structure of seven "steps or revelations," which provide the framework for chapters three through nine of the completed text. Angela's Assisi pilgrimage is the lynch pin that holds these two narrative structures together. Chapter one of the *Memorial* concludes by identifying the pilgrimage with the twentieth "step or change" in the initial pattern of thirty, chapter two includes Brother A's eyewitness description of Angela's outburst in the Basilica of St. Francis, and chapter three presents Angela's more detailed account of her mystical experiences during and after the pilgrimage, which constitute the "first step or revelation" in Brother A's revised pattern of seven.

The friar-scribe admitted that the revised seven-step pattern was his editorial construct, which he applied to Angela's experiences according to his own criteria. He did so because he could no longer sufficiently distinguish between Angela's various experiences according to the original structure of thirty.[22] This suggests that even if Angela did at some point speak of thirty steps or changes, it was primarily the friar who actually assigned the various episodes of Angela's spiritual life into this predetermined pattern. In the first chapter of the *Memorial*, he states: "she herself did not then reveal anything to me except what was fitting for her to say in order to distinguish the steps."[23] Unfortunately, the phrase used does not clearly specify who did the distinguishing. However, if Angela herself was consistently interpreting her experiences in terms of a pattern of thirty, it is hard to explain how the friar became so confused that he had to introduce a new pattern of seven. Both the thirty and seven-part patterns seem extrinsic to the immediacy of Angela's experiences.

The language used to describe the constituent parts of these sequences of thirty and seven raises further questions of voice and interpretation. In his editorial comments, Brother A. favored the word *passus* or steps to refer to these constituent parts, particularly

[22] *Memorial* 2.12–17, p. 160.

[23] "ipsa non manifestavit mihi tunc nisi quantum oportebat eam dicere pro passibus distinguendis." *Memorial* 1.35–36, p. 134.

in reference to the initial pattern of thirty.[24] Reference to "steps" seldom appears in passages presented as Angela's dictation. This suggests that the alternative terms of *mutationes* (changes) and *revelationes* (revelations) may be closer to the vernacular expressions Angela herself used. These terms are also free from the connotations of hierarchical ascent that tend to adhere to both medieval and contemporary usage of the step metaphor. The literal meaning of the Latin word *passus* is footstep or stride; the *Memorial* employs the word within a constellation of journey and movement metaphors that evoke a winding road of pilgrimage rather than the vertical steps of a staircase.[25] The *Memorial*'s alternate terminology of thirty "changes" and seven "revelations" is more evocative of the non-linear, interwoven and dynamic quality of Angela's mysticism. For these reasons, the remainder of this essay departs from the common practice of distinguishing between thirty "initial steps" and seven "supplementary steps" and instead refers to thirty changes and seven revelations.

Although the overlapping patterns of the *Memorial* attempt to give a sequential narrative order to Angela's mystical experiences, the diversity of patterns suggests that something about the experiences resisted such structures. Despite the text's attempts to order Angela's experiences in ascending numerical sequences, the content of these sequences keeps circling back upon itself, with the primary progressive movement being one of intensifying personal integration and mystical participation in the divine communion of Triune Love, joined to increasing mutuality with others in expanding circles of creaturely communion. The intensifying and expanding dimensions of this spiral are rooted in Angela's growing consciousness of the Trinity as a mystery of communion, in which radical unity coexists with personal distinctiveness. The intrinsic spiral pattern of the *Memorial* points to this paradox of communion, which resists resolution into

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[24] *Memorial* 2.12–17, p. 160. Although Brother A. does not use *mutationes* in his editorial comments regarding the initial nineteen distinctions, he uses both *passus* and *revelationes* to refer to the final seven.

[25] The vertical metaphors that Angela does use, such as divine "abyss," (*Memorial* 9.300, p. 380) suggest a spiraling descent into the depths of the ocean or the crater of a smoldering volcano rather than the more familiar images of climbing ladders or mountains, common to mystics from Bonaventure to Thomas Merton. *Instruction IV* contains the only usage of the ladder image in the entire *Liber*, and it occurs in the concluding editorial comments by the *Instruction*'s scribe, not in the material based upon Angela's oral teaching; *Instruction IV*.230–3, p. 504.

linear or hierarchical paradigms. Angela's knowledge of God, self and others is intimately intertwined in progressively intensifying and expanding spirals of communion.

Intrinsic Spiral Pattern: In the Holy Spirit

The *Memorial* suggests that Angela's spiral pattern of prayer began in an experience of the Holy Spirit. This pattern is most obvious in the *Memorial*'s account of the first revelation, particularly during Angela's pilgrimage to Assisi. On the road to Assisi, the immanent divine presence within Angela herself and within all other creatures is explicitly revealed as the Holy Spirit. However, the *Memorial* suggests that Angela had already begun to experience this immanent divine presence in the initial nineteen changes that depict her spiritual conversion and growth prior to the Assisi pilgrimage.

The first chapter of the *Memorial* recounts the initial six changes as a movement of conversion that drew Angela out of a sense of radical alienation and into an initial awareness of the invitation to enter into communion with God and others. Angela's conversion began with her fear of damnation. She experienced herself as alienated from God by an unnamed mortal sin, and alienated from the Church and other Christians by the fact that she had been too ashamed to confess this sin. She was living a superficial Christianity, taking part in the rituals of faith, even receiving sacramental communion, while aware that her inner state was profoundly discordant with Christian moral norms. While in this state of alienation, Angela was not conscious of any divine presence or guidance, but when she looked back upon her journey, she identified her recognition of her sinful state as the first "change" along the spiral path of communion.[26]

The *Memorial*'s account of the initial six changes portrays Angela's alienation from God and others by emphasizing her own actions and feelings: she was ashamed of her sins, she prayed to St. Francis for aid, she decided to confess, she engaged in extraordinary penances to satisfy God.[27] This first movement of the spiral describes the soul as fixated upon her own sinfulness and need. The divine is seldom directly named and then only generically, as God and Lord. The

[26] *Memorial* 1.7–12, p. 132.
[27] *Memorial* 1.10–25, 33–6, pp. 132–134.

alienated soul struggling toward reconciliation does not yet know enough about herself or divine mystery to name either more fully. Only with the benefit of hindsight does Angela recognize the immanent presence of divine grace in these initial changes: "I decided, by God's causing, to confess."[28]

The *Memorial* presents the initial movements of divine grace as mediated through other creatures. If the first step out of alienation is to recognize one's situation, the second is to "confess" this truth to another and ask for help. The second change recounts Angela's prayer to St. Francis to help her find a confessor, thereby expressing her incipient trust in the heavenly communion of the saints. The Poverello's promise of aid restored her trust in the possibility of finding a good confessor on earth and thereby guided her back into the sacramental communion of the Church. Yet even after confessing, Angela continued to circle between the bitter knowledge of her own defects (changes three and five) and initial glimpses of the light of divine mercy (changes four and six).[29] It is only when this circle opened beyond her claustrophobic concentration upon herself to embrace the divine presence in others that Angela spiraled forward into the next phase of her journey.

In the sixth change, the alienated self looks beyond her own sorry state to recognize the relational dimensions of both sin and grace. Angela recounts "a certain illumination of grace" by which she recognized that she had sinned against all creatures.[30]

> And I was asking all creatures, which I saw that I had offended, that they not accuse me. And then it was given to me to pray with a great fire of love; and I was invoking all the saints and the blessed Virgin that they intercede for me and ask Love, who had done these aforementioned good things for me, that, since I recognized myself as dead, [Love] would make me alive. And it seemed to me that all creatures and all the saints had mercy on me.[31]

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[28] "deliberavi, Domino faciente, confiteri . . . ." *Memorial* 1.19, p. 132.

[29] *Memorial* 1.39–58, pp. 134–36.

[30] "quaedam illuminatio gratiae." *Memorial* 1.49, p. 136.

[31] "Et rogabam omnes creaturas, quas videbam me offendisse, ut non accusarent me. Et tunc dabatur mihi cum magno igne amoris orare: et invocabam omnes sanctos et beatam Virginem ut intercederent pro me et rogarent Amorem, qui tanta bona praedicta mihi fecerat, ut, quia cognoscebam me mortuam, faceret me vivam. Et videbatur mihi quod omnes creaturae haberent de me pietatem et omnes sancti." *Memorial* 1.53–8, p. 136.

For the first time in the *Memorial*, Angela here refers to God as "Love." This Love is both mediated and experienced in an expanding spiral of communion that embraces the Virgin Mary, the saints and all creatures within its circles of reconciled relationship.

The *Memorial*'s account of the seventh through nineteenth changes traces the remainder of the first full revolution of Angela's spiral journey from her dawning devotion to the crucified Christ through the promise of Trinitarian indwelling. Angela's initial progress along this journey of intensifying and expanding communion was tentative and partial. Even as she grew in her consciousness of divine intimacy and began to expand her circle of relationships within the penitential and Franciscan movements, she continued to experience alienation in her own self-doubt and in the criticism she received from her immediate family, certain Friars, and the general public. This first round of the journey thus sets forth the recurring pattern of intensifying immersion in the Spirit, through Christ, into the Trinity and expanding communion with other creatures beyond the self. It also portrays the continuing need for subsequent cycles progressing further along the spiral path of intensifying and expanding communion.

Although the initial nineteen changes hint at the initiating and sustaining role of the Holy Spirit within this spiral journey, it is not until the pivotal twentieth change and first revelation that the Holy Spirit is explicitly named. As she traveled the pilgrimage road from Foligno to Assisi, Angela learned to identify the illuminating Love that had guided her from the death of sin to the beginnings of the life of communion with God's self disclosure as the Holy Spirit. The *Memorial* reports that Angela began this new movement of the spiral from within the circles of communion that she had attained thus far. She traveled as a Franciscan lay penitent, accompanied by other pilgrims and seeking the aid of St. Francis to observe the Franciscan rule she had recently professed. However, although she addressed St. Francis as she traveled along the road, it was not Francis who replied.

As she came to the intersection of three roads (foreshadowing the Trinitarian dimensions of the subsequent mystical encounter), the Holy Spirit spoke directly to Angela:

> You petitioned my servant Francis, yet I did not want to send any other messenger. I am the Holy Spirit who comes to you to give you

> a consolation that you have never tasted; and I will come with you, interiorly within you, even into [the basilica of] St. Francis . . . and I will not depart from you until the second time you come into Saint Francis and then I will leave you according to this consolation but I will never leave you otherwise if you love me.[32]

What follows is an extended intimate dialogue between Angela and the Holy Spirit. The divine suitor draws Angela into a relationship of mutual intimacy, addressing Angela as daughter, delight, temple and spouse, and assuring her that she is uniquely loved.[33] She is invited to "love me, because you are much loved by me."[34] Divine love precedes and empowers human response.

However, the *Memorial* records Angela's first response as the objection that she was not worthy of such attention. Just as in the initial spiraling experiences of the first six changes, only by recognizing the Spirit's presence both within her and beyond her was Angela able to accept her place in the spiral of communion. When she tried to escape the inner voice by focusing her attention outward to the surrounding countryside, she found that wherever she looked, she was told "This is my creature" and felt "an ineffable divine sweetness."[35] When she worried that this was a temptation to spiritual pride, the Spirit reminded her of her previous experiences of her own sinfulness and Christ's mercy.[36] She was told that, although she could not communicate with her companions during the intensity of this mystical encounter, the Spirit would not have addressed her if she had traveled with persons of lesser quality.[37] Wherever she focused her attention, from the depths of herself, to the prayerful company of her companions, to the natural world that surrounded her, Angela found herself met by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

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[32] "Tu servum meam Franciscum et ego nolui mittere alium nuntium. Et ego sum Spiritus Sanctus qui veni ad te ut darem tibi consolationem quam numquam gustasi; et veniam tecum intus in te usque in Sanctum Franciscum . . . et nondiscedere a te usquequo secunda vice venies in Sanctum Franciscum, et tunc discedam a te secundum istam consolationem, sed a te non discedam de cetero unquam si me diliges." *Memorial* 1.35–7, 39–42, pp. 178–180.

[33] *Memorial* 3.43–46, p. 180.

[34] "ama me, quia tu es multum amata a me." *Memorial* 3.44, p. 180.

[35] "Ista est mea creatura. Et sentiebam dulcedinem divinam ineffabilem." *Memorial* 3.59, p. 180.

[36] *Memorial* 3.62–63, p. 180.

[37] *Memorial* 1.76–84, p. 182.

As this mystical encounter unfolded, intimacy with the Holy Spirit merged into the embrace of the crucified Christ and eventually into a vision of an immense majesty that Angela could only describe as "all good."[38] She subsequently understood that this entire experience had fulfilled the promise, received in the nineteenth change, that "the whole Trinity will come into you."[39] The Assisi pilgrimage thus establishes the spiral pattern in which the Holy Spirit initiates the mystical movement through Christ into the Trinity. However, once established, the role of the Holy Spirit again recedes throughout the remainder of the *Memorial*.[40] The subsequent revelations tend to emphasize the Christological and Trinitarian dimensions of Angela's spiral path. As Angela enters into intensifying communion with the entire Trinity, explicit references to the Holy Spirit alone become infrequent. They occur primarily in the context of a Trinitarian doxology, as when Angela receives the blessing of "the Father, Son and Holy Spirit."[41] However, the *Memorial* continues to depict the Holy Spirit's presence within the intensifying and expanding spiral by more indirect strategies, particularly in episodes that echo aspects of the Spirit's self-revelation during the Assisi pilgrimage.

One such strategy is to highlight the divine presence immanent in the natural world. At the beginning of the fourth revelation, the *Memorial* recounts a mystical locution in which the speaker asserts "I, who speak to you, am the divine power, who brings grace to you."[42] Angela subsequently receives a related vision of the immense scope of the created world, in which she understands that "this world is pregnant with God" because "the power of God exceeds and fills all."[43] The references to divine grace immanent in the human person and to the divine presence immanent in the world both recall Angela's dialogue with the Holy Spirit on the road to Assisi. The

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[38] *Memorial* 3.65–67, p. 182, 3.96–108, p. 184, "omne bonum," 3.106, p. 184.

[39] "tota Trinitas veniet in te." *Memorial* 1.287, p. 154.

[40] The Holy Spirit's role in not only initiating but also sustaining the spiral path of mystical prayer is further developed in *Instruction 3*, especially verses 180–191, p. 458 and 351–366, pp. 474–476; see Tomkinson, "In the Midst of the Trinity," pp. 396–404.

[41] *Memorial* 6.35–40, p. 258; 6.79–82, p. 262; 6.133–143, pp. 266–268; and 6.162–168, p. 270.

[42] "Ego, qui loquor tibi, sum divina potentia, qui apporto tibi gratiam." *Memorial* 6.7–8, p. 256.

[43] "Est iste mundus praegnans de Deo . . . sed potentiam Dei excedere et implere omnia." *Memorial* 6.65–68, p. 262.

vision of the fourth revelation goes a step further by asserting that the divine presence indwells both human and non-human creatures. The natural world does not reflect divine power as something external to creation, but rather that power is immanently present in and yet transcendent of the finite world, as an unborn child is both contained in and yet distinct from its mother. The spiral intensifies even as it expands.

The Holy Spirit's association with images of mutual indwelling is reaffirmed in one of the culminating episodes of the *Memorial*'s final chapter. On the road to Assisi, the Holy Spirit spoke to Angela as a lover to a beloved, assuring her that just as the Spirit had come to rest intimately in her, so was she invited to rest in God.[44] This personal indwelling of the Spirit was confirmed shortly after Angela's return to Foligno, when her companion received a revelation informing her that "the Holy Spirit is interiorly within L."[45] By the seventh and final revelation of the *Memorial*, the inner chamber of Angela's soul had become the dwelling place of all three persons of the Trinity, represented as the All Good. Not only did the Triune Good dwell in Angela but she had been drawn into the mutual embrace of the Trinity. In a passage of revelation seven that directly mirrors the conversation between Angela and the Holy Spirit on the road to Assisi, the entire Trinity whispers endearments to Angela, naming her daughter, temple and beloved. She is told: "In you rests the whole Trinity, total truth, thus that you hold me and I hold you."[46] The initial personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit has become a path into the intimate tri-personal communion of Trinitarian Love. Again, the spiral intensifies even as it expands.

Intrinsic Spiral Pattern: Through Christ into the midst of the Trinity

The vulnerable God Human was the center of Angela's spiraling path into the Trinity. Although the revelation of the immanent presence of the Holy Spirit within herself and others initiated Angela's

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[44] *Memorial* 3.43–47, p. 180.

[45] "Spiritus Sanctus est intus in L.," *Memorial* 3.167, p. 188. The initial "L" apparently stands for "Lella," a diminutive of Angela, which also appears on the cover page of Assisi MS 342; see Lachance, *Complete Works*, p. 319, n. 3.

[46] *Memorial* 9.398–419, pp. 388–90; "in te pausat tota Trinitas, tota veritas, ita quod tu tenes me et ego teneo te." *Memorial* 9.418–419, p. 390.

spiral journey and persisted as one dimension of the spiral, the divine presence as Spirit seemed too intangible to fully reassure Angela in her persistent doubts that she was worthy of God's mercy and love. It was the concrete revelation of divine love in the crucified Christ that repeatedly reassured Angela of her salvation and drew her forward on the journey. Beginning with the seventh change, Angela's initial movement out of alienation toward communion was confirmed and strengthened through her focus upon the crucified Christ. Subsequent changes presented her vow of chastity, her penitential lifestyle, her desire to practice voluntary poverty and her extreme sensitivity to images of the passion as ways in which she began to identify with the Crucified.[47] These attempts led to the promise of Trinitarian indwelling given in the nineteenth change.

Angela's account of the Assisi pilgrimage also acknowledged her need for the reassurance of a tangible divine presence. When the Holy Spirit's intimate affirmations of indwelling presence within Angela and the natural world failed to reassure her, the divine speaker suddenly shifted persona: "And, in order to give me security concerning my doubt, he said, 'I am the one who was crucified for you.'"[48] Like a child who is afraid of the dark, Angela desired the reassurance of an embodied presence, which Christ provided her. While the Holy Spirit initiated Angela's spiral path and facilitated the expanding dynamic of communion with other creatures, the crucified Christ was the incarnation of divine Love who drew Angela into the intensifying intimacy of Trinitarian communion.

The culmination of Angela's Assisi pilgrimage occurred as she entered the upper Basilica of St. Francis and saw a stained-glass window that depicted Christ embracing Francis. Christ immediately spoke within her, promising to hold her in similar and even greater intimacy. He repeated the assurance spoken twice by the Spirit, that although this intense mystical encounter would soon draw to a close, "I will never leave you if you love me."[49] Even as she began to feel the bitterness of imminent divine departure, Angela also reported an intensification of her vision. She saw "reality abounding, immense

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[47] *Memorial* 1.59–137, pp. 136–142; 1.265–267, p. 152.

[48] "Et, ut daret mihi securitatem de dubio meo, dicebat: Ego sum qui fui crucifixus pro te." *Memorial* 3.65–67, p. 182.

[49] "te non dimittam unquam si me diliges." *Memorial* 3.100–1, p. 184.

majesty that I do not know how to speak of, but it seemed to me that it was all good."[50] Christ's intimate embrace opened into a vision of the ineffable All Good.

The *Memorial* does not initially specify whether the "all good" refers to the person of the Father or to the mystery of the Trinity as a whole. Either interpretation would have been possible from within the tradition of medieval Franciscan spirituality. Francis of Assisi consistently named God as "all good." He explicitly connected the phrase with the Trinity in his *Praises of God*: "You are three and one, the Lord God of gods, you are the good, all good, the highest good."[51] In the sixth chapter of *The Soul's Journey Into God*, Bonaventure also associated the mystery of the Trinity with God's primary name as Good.[52] However, in keeping with the Pseudo-Dionysian concept of the self-diffusive good, Bonaventure identified the person of the Father as the primordial source of goodness. Thus, although the seventh chapter of the *Soul's Journey* presents mystical union with the Trinity as the goal of mystical ascent, Bonaventure patterned this ascent as a return "with Christ crucified . . . to the Father."[53]

Angela's language of the "all good" is never directly associated with the person of the Father, but it is not clearly identified with the entire Trinity until the seventh revelation. The first revelation simply affirms that the Assisi pilgrimage fulfilled God's earlier promise of Trinitarian indwelling and that the pattern of this fulfillment began in the Holy Spirit and moved through Christ. The revelations between the first and seventh further develop the Christocentric dimension of Angela's mysticism. Although her spiral path continues to include expanding recognition of divine presence in herself and others, and intensifying glimpses of an ineffable All Good, the most vivid narrative focus of the middle chapters of the *Memorial* is Angela's relationship with the crucified Christ.

Revelations two through five depict Angela's intensifying physical and emotional identification with the vulnerable humanity of Christ.

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[50] "Vidi rem planam, maiestatem immensam quam nescio dicere, sed videbatur mihi quod erat omne bonum." *Memorial* 3.105–6, p. 184.

[51] Francis of Assisi, *The Praises of God*, 3, *FAED* 1, p. 109; *Opuscula*, p. 142.

[52] Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 5.2; 6.1–7, in *Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey into God, The Tree of Life, The Life of St. Francis*, ed. and trans. Ewert Cousins (New York, 1978), pp. 95, 102–109; *Itin* (5.308b, 310b–312a).

[53] Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 7.6, p. 116; *Itin* (5.313b).

For example, revelation two recounts her desire to suffer a martyr's painful death.[54] In revelation three, she receives a vision regarding those who share Christ's plate and cup of suffering out of love and puts the invitation into practice by drinking the water with which she had bathed a leper.[55] In the fourth revelation, she spirals between experiences of demonic temptation and mystical union with Christ, who embraced her "with that arm with which he was crucified."[56] The fifth revelation further intensifies this intimacy, as Angela shares her reflections upon the self-emptying of the poor, suffering Christ and describes a vivid vision in which she embraced her Crucified Lord as he lay in the tomb on Holy Saturday.[57]

Angela's identification with the vulnerable God Human reached its culmination in the agonies recounted as the *Memorial*'s "sixth revelation." Her sufferings from physical illness and pain, demonic temptations, and spiritual abandonment intensified beyond description. She struggled to depict her condition with the image of a hanged man, bound and blindfolded, who "remains on the gallows, dangling from a rope, and he lives, [although] there remains to him no help, no support at all, no remedy."[58] Stripped of all sense of divine presence, Angela cried out to and with the Crucified, "My son, my son, do not abandon me, my son!"[59] She challenged God to send her to eternal hell at once, since she was already submerged in its agonies.[60] Angela's descent into absolute spiritual desolation is stunning. Moving beyond her embrace of Christ in the tomb in revelation five, revelation six depicts her participation in Christ's abandonment on the cross and his descent into hell.

Angela's profound identification with the Crucified is the key to understanding the relationship between revelations six and seven. Although the *Memorial* presents these two revelations as separate steps

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[54] *Memorial* 4.85–95, pp. 206–208.

[55] *Memorial* 5.9–42, pp. 230–232; 5.116–141, pp. 240–242.

[56] *Memorial* 6.44–52, p. 260; 6.148–53, pp. 268–270; "cum illo brachio cum quo fuit crucifixus." *Memorial* 6.235–6, p. 276.

[57] *Memorial* 7.18–111, pp. 290–298.

[58] "nullam sciebat assignare similitudinem aliam nisi de homine suspenso per gulam, qui, ligatis manibus post tergum et velatis oculis, suspensus per funem remansis-set in furcis et viveret, cui nullam auxilium, nullum omnino sustentamentum vel remedium remansisset." *Memorial* 7.22–25, p. 338.

[59] "Fili mi, fili mi, non me dimittas, fili mi!" *Memorial* 8.53–55, p. 340.

[60] *Memorial* 8.78–80, p. 342.

recounted in consecutive chapters, Brother A. acknowledges that they were in fact intertwined and even simultaneous:

> I, brother scribe, witnessed this faithful one of Christ while she was in this aforesaid sixth step [which was] more horrible than I can put into writing. But this sixth step lasted a brief time, that is almost two years, and it ran simultaneously with the seventh step, which began some time before the sixth step and which follows it as more wonderful in every way.[61]

Despite Brother A.'s editorial attempt to distinguish these apparently contrasting yet interwoven experiences, the two revelations intrude upon each other, even in his recounting. Thus, in the midst of describing the suffering experienced in the sixth revelation, Angela recounts moments of grace and solace.[62] Similarly, although the seventh revelation is characterized by ineffable mystical consolations, Angela reports that she continued to be afflicted by demonic persecution, through physical and, to a lesser extent, spiritual suffering.[63] The paradoxical unity and distinction of these contrasting revelations discloses the relationship between the Christological and Trinitarian dimensions of Angela's spiral path. As Angela's suffering humanity merges with Christ's suffering humanity, she enters *in persona Christi* into the very depths of Trinitarian love.

Both revelations six and seven recount Angela's repeated insistence that the spiraling intensity of her mystical experiences exceeded the possibility of linguistic expression. The seventh revelation depicts Angela as increasingly turning to a strategy of apophatic discourse, in which she moved from affirmation, through negation, to intensified affirmation. She protested that all of her previous linguistic descriptions, including those of Christ and the all good, were inadequate.[64] She introduced a plethora of new images to express her intensifying mystical consciousness, including ineffable darkness, the divine abyss, and mutual self-presentation.[65] She subsequently wove the old

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[61] "Et ego frater scriptor vidi praedictam fidelem Christi esse in praedicto sexto passu multo horribilius quam scribi possit. Sed duravit praedictus sextus passus parvo tempore, scilicet fere duobus annis, et cucurrit simul cum septimo passu qui incoepit ante sextum passum aliquantulum temporis, et qui sequitur omnibus mirabilior." *Memorial* 8.113–121, p. 346.

[62] *Memorial* 8.60–66, p. 342; 8.92–104, p. 344.

[63] *Memorial* 9.68–75, p. 360.

[64] *Memorial* 9.32–49, pp. 356–358; 9.303–310, p. 380.

[65] *Memorial* 9.11–65, pp. 353–358; 9.299–301, p. 380; 9.318–319, p. 382; 9.355, p. 384; 9.447–449, pp. 392–394.

and new images together, thereby expanding the limits of both. The very simultaneity and distinction of revelations six and seven is an example of this apophatic strategy. Despite Brother A's editorial separation of these intertwined experiences into separate and contrasting narrative units, Angela affirmed their intrinsic unity in a pivotal vision recounted in revelation seven.

The narrative begins by disclosing the identity between the apophatic language of darkness and the cataphatic language of the "all good." The symbol of darkness here points to the ineffable All Good that is beyond all finite goods and partial descriptions. All these are "less than that most secret good, since that good which I see with darkness is total, all these others are but a part."[66] Angela affirms that she frequently sees "that all good always with darkness, but not in the aforesaid and so superlatively high mode and with such great darkness."[67] A few lines later, she identifies this ineffable vision "with such great darkness" as a form of mystical immersion within the Trinity itself: "in that Trinity which I see with such great darkness it seems that I stand and recline in the midst."[68] The Trinitarian dimensions of Angela's allusive language are finally made clear: both the cataphatic language of all good, which spirals through revelations one through five and into revelation seven, and the apophatic language of darkness, which occurs in revelations six and seven, point toward Angela's intensifying mystical participation in the ineffable communion of love that constitutes the very life of the Trinity.

The further unfolding of this vision affirms the spiral pattern of Angela's movement through Christ into the Trinity. Even though this immersion in the darkness of the Trinity surpasses all describable realities, including the humanity of Christ, it coexists with and is mediated by Angela's identification with the "God Human." Angela recounts that as her immersion in the darkness of the Trinity both withdraws and remains:

> I see the God human; and he draws my soul with such gentleness, that he sometimes says "You are I and I am you." And I see those eyes, and that face so pleasing and with such fitness that it embraces

[66] "minus illo bono secretissimo, quia illud bonum quod video cum tenebra est totum, illa vero omnia alia sunt pars." *Memorial* 9.48–9, p. 358.

[67] "vidisset illud omne bonum semper cum tenebra, sed non praedicto et tam altissimo modo et cum tanta tenebra." *Memorial* 9.63–5, p. 360.

[68] "Et in illa Trinitate quam video cum tanta tenebra videtur mihi stare et iacere in medio." *Memorial* 9.80–1, p. 360.

> me. And that which resounds from those eyes and from that face is that which I said [was] what I see in that darkness, which comes from within, and that is what so delights me that it cannot be told.[69]

Here, Angela's intensifying identification with the God Human has reached its completion: "you are I and I am you." In this subject/object fusion, there is no intermediary between Angela and Christ. They are one in the vulnerability of their common humanity, in their shared experience of poverty, suffering and contempt. There is also no intermediary between Christ and the Trinity. The darkness of the Trinity resounds from the eyes of the God Human. By her union with the humanity of Christ, Angela shares in the hypostatic union between Christ's humanity and divinity. She enters *in persona Christi* into the midst of the Trinity. She sings of the cross of Christ as the bed upon which she experiences the self-giving love of the Triune God.[70]

As Angela's mystical identity with Christ draws her into mystical communion with the Trinity, the final episodes of revelation seven spiral back to the images of the Assisi pilgrimage. On the road to Assisi, the Spirit came to rest within Angela and she was invited to rest in God.[71] The seventh revelation depicts the fulfillment of that invitation to mutual indwelling as Angela describes the inner "room" of her soul where the "all good" dwells.[72] In this place of communion, Angela is simultaneously conscious of the divine presence in all creation and her own personal intimacy with and within the Trinity.[73] In a clear echo of the Holy Spirit's initial words of endearment, God calls Angela daughter, temple and beloved.[74] Triune Love assures her: "In you rests the whole Trinity, total truth, thus that you hold me and I hold you."[75] The spiral path that began in inti-

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[69] "video Deum hominem; et trahit animam cum tanta mansuetudine, ut dicat aliquando: Tu es ego et ego sum tu. Et video illos oculos et illam faciem tantum placibilem et cum tanta aptitudine, ut amplexetur me. Et illud quod resultat de illis oculis et de illa facie, est illud quod ego dixi quod ego video in illa tenebra, quod venit de intus, et illud est quod me tantum delectat quod narrari non potest." *Memorial* 9.91–96, p. 362.

[70] *Memorial* 9.104–123, pp. 362–364.

[71] *Memorial* 3.46–47, p. 180.

[72] "in anima mea est una camera . . . est ibi illud omne bonum." *Memorial* 9.388–403.

[73] *Memorial* 9.401–421, pp. 388–390.

[74] *Memorial* 9.417–418, p. 390; cf. *Memorial* 3.43–4, p. 180.

[75] *Memorial* 9.398–419, pp. 388–390; "in te pausat tota Trinitas, tota veritas, ita quod tu tenes me et ego teneo te." *Memorial* 9.418–419, p. 390.

macy with the Holy Spirit has moved through profound identification with Christ ("You are I and I am you") into the mutual embrace of the Trinity ("you hold me and I hold you"). If the first phrase suggests a mystical fusion of Angela's identity with that of the vulnerable God Human, the second affirms that her personhood is neither absorbed nor lost but ineffably actualized in the dynamic intimacy and mutuality of Trinitarian communion.

This most profound experience of the mutuality of Trinitarian communion spirals Angela back into a renewed sense of ecclesial communion. After reporting the Trinity's words of mutual embrace, Angela adds that one of the fruits of this mystical consciousness is that "I understand with greater capacity and with greater delight how God comes in the sacrament of the altar with that community."[76] The mystic here refers to an earlier vision of revelation seven, in which she saw Christ in the Eucharist, accompanied by the community of angels.[77] Thus, Angela's mystical participation in Trinitarian communion immediately opens out into the communion of the Church. This ecclesial communion is experienced in the sacramental presence by which the divine self-offering of the Incarnation and the Cross is continued in the Eucharist and in the mystical communion of all who gather at Christ's banquet table, whether on earth or in heaven. The spiral expands, even as it intensifies.

Conclusion

As Christianity enters the twenty-first century, the linear, hierarchical patterns that have often structured its systems of spirituality are becoming increasingly discordant with the changing paradigms of a postmodern world. The twentieth century shook modernity's naive belief in the myth of linear progress. Contemporary feminist and ecological theologians argue that Christian patterns of ascent from the material to the spiritual have contributed to western culture's devaluing of women and nature. Post-colonial theorists and liberation

[76] "intelligo cum magna capacitate et cum magno delectamento quomodo Deus venit in Sacramento altaris cum illa societate." *Memorial* 9.420–421, p. 390.

[77] "Christus venit in Sacramento altaris . . . cum illa societate." *Memorial* 9.269–271, p. 376, "illa societate erat throni." *Memorial* 9.276, p. 378. Medieval angelology recognized the "thrones" as one of the nine ranks of angels.

theologians criticize hierarchical power structures that serve privileged elites at the expense of suffering multitudes. Contemporary physics offers a vision of reality as constituted by dynamic relationships that reveal patterns in apparent chaos. In the context of these paradigm shifts, the survival of Angela's spiral pattern of prayer within the *Memorial*, in spite of the text's attempt to structure her experiences into a sequential series of hierarchical steps, offers an alternative vision of Christian spirituality.

Angela's spiral pattern of prayer presents a distinctive understanding of mystical communion with divine and created reality. Although her language of the All Good drew upon the heritage of Francis and Bonaventure, the intrinsic pattern of the *Memorial* suggests that Angela departed from their tendency to envision the spiritual journey as a return to the Father. Instead, she depicted a spiraling path of intensifying and expanding communion that moved in the Spirit, through Christ, into the midst of the Trinity. For Angela, the intensifying spiral into the ineffable intimacy of Trinitarian communion was inseparable from the expanding spiral of encountering the Triune God in the self, the Eucharist, the communion of the saints and in all of creation. The final episodes and postscripts of the *Memorial* reaffirm this mutual dynamism of intensification and expansion: they recount the infinite expansion of Angela's own soul in relationship to God, the similarity between mystical and beatific communion as perpetually intensifying experiences of the Triune Good, and the mutual relationship between God and the faithful established by Eucharistic communion.[78] Brother A's attempt to bring the *Memorial* to a coherent conclusion remains in tension with the intrinsic spiral pattern's resistance to recognizing any single endpoint. The spiral of communion continues to intensify and expand into the infinity of All Good.

Angela's intensifying and expanding spiral into communion points to a profoundly relational vision of divine and created reality as constituted by dynamic relationships of intimate mutuality. Such a spirituality can speak to contemporary insights and needs. Angela's mysticism did not isolate her from the world. Even as her mystical communion with the Triune God intensified, it simultaneously drew her into expanding circles of interdependent relationship. Although

[78] *Memorial* 9.444–465, pp. 392–394; 9.473–482, p. 396; 9.484–492, pp. 396–398.

the concrete details of her penitential practices (such as drinking the wash water of a leper) are not likely to foster contemporary imitation, the intrinsic spiral pattern of Angela's prayer offers a vision of Christian spirituality in which loving relationship with God cannot be separated from right relationship with all other creatures, each of which is valued as a particular expression of the infinite All Good. Despite the vast gaps of time and culture that separate Angela of Foligno from twenty-first century Christians, her mystical journey presents a distinctive spirituality of communion that offers a fruitful pattern for contemporary pilgrims.

SINGING WITH ANGELS: IACOPONE DA TODI'S PRAYERFUL RHETORIC

Alessandro Vettori

Introduction

Iacopone da Todi has been remembered mostly for his polemic tone against the papacy, vitriolic attacks at the church establishment, and passionate arguments in favor of radical poverty. All these subject matters are expressed in a fiery language that has impressed and attracted generations of readers for its personal quality and peculiar rhetoric.[1]

Iacopone (ca. 1236–1306) was a Franciscan Friar of the third generation, a Spiritual, a poet, and the author of a collection of one hundred lauds. What little information is preserved about his life comes from hagiographic accounts and is hardly biographically reliable or historically accurate. He allegedly was born to a high-middle class (or possibly even noble) family of Todi in central Italy, studied jurisprudence, and practiced law for the first part of his life. His conversion happened after a merry and leisurely young age and was related to an incident that caused his wife's death. Monna Vanna was enjoying herself at a party when the floor on which she was dancing collapsed, crushing her to death. Iacopone undressed her body for burial and discovered a hair-shirt, which Vanna had kept concealed even from him. Unbeknownst to him, Monna Vanna purged her soul by mortifying her flesh, while conducting the luxurious lifestyle her husband enjoyed. According to hagiographic sources, this proof of faith constituted the decisive turning point in Iacopone's conversion.[2] After this episode, Iacopone renounced his riches, abandoned his law profession, and became a *bizocone*, a penitent beggar.

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[1] The content of this essay has been drawn in part from my study on Francis's and Iacopone's poetics, *Poets of Divine Love. Franciscan Mystical Poetry of the Thirteenth Century* (New York, 2004).

[2] This is the episode as reported in the *Franceschina*, one of the most widespread chronicles of Iacopone's life. See *Le vite antiche di Iacopone da Todi*, ed. Enrico Menestò (Florence, 1981), pp. 36–37.

For the subsequent ten years he repeatedly requested admission into the Franciscan Order, which was finally granted him in 1278. Iacopone, together with the Spiritual Franciscan faction, allied himself with Cardinal Colonna and fought against Pope Boniface VIII's troops at Palestrina. After his party's defeat, he was excommunicated and incarcerated. He survived the papal jail and, when he was finally released at Boniface's death in 1303, he retreated to the convent of Collazzone, where he died three years later in 1306. Besides the *Laude*, which is his only literary accomplishment, other devotional texts have been attributed to him: the famous Latin sequence *Stabat Mater dolorosa*, the *Trattato*, a treatise about mystical union with God, and the *Detti*, a collection of moral proverbs.[3]

Criticism has traditionally considered Iacopone a marginalized presence; he figures as an outcast both in the literary and the mystical realms. Treatments of specific aspects of his poetic production limit themselves to evaluating its linguistic peculiarities, assertive tone, and spiritual discourse. An overview of Iacopone's prayerful rhetoric will highlight the rich combination of poetic ability and doctrinal content, which originally contributes to the creation of successful poetic texts. Iacopone achieves aesthetically impeccable poetry, while preserving the theological message he wants to convey by resorting to a thematization of nudity, sexual encounters, and silence. He then expresses the ineffable union with divinity thanks to the implementation of a typically medieval concept of music. As defined by medieval philosophical constructs, in Iacopone music constitutes the connecting element between poetry and spirituality. When intelligible words fail to account for the mystical experience, music and singing constitute the more ethereal means which allows the poet to communicate his experience of the ineffable.

Poetic Lauda as a Form of Prayer[4]

Iacopone's collection, known simply by its editorial title *Laude*, comprises one hundred poems featuring a wide array of topics and styles.

[3] In this study Iacopone's collection is referred to by its Italian editorial title, *Laude*, rather than the English *Lauds*.

[4] "Lauda" (pl. "laude") is the Italian term for "laud." An explanation of the lauda as a popular and poetic genre will be given in the following pages of this essay.

They are invocations, petitions, thankful songs to God; didactic, edifying texts; virulent and satirical attacks on the poet's enemies; irreverent and pugnacious diatribes against the corrupt papacy and clergy; poetic renderings of theological and doctrinal issues; as well as prayerful addresses to God. Some of the poems can be classified as tensons, others as dramatic dialogues, some as litanies, others as prayers.[5] The title of the collection identifies the specific genre of lauda, but conceals a polymorphous ensemble of poetic enterprises having religious tone and content as their common denominator. Iacopone experiments with numerous rhetorical structures, thereby transforming the lauda into an extremely flexible poetic medium.

By Iacopone's time the lauda was a well established poetic genre and a popular form of prayer.[6] The Latin lauda had its roots in liturgy. It derived from the Gospel acclamation, the Hallelujah, during Mass. The lauda also was, and still is, the name assigned to the morning canonical prayer, Lauds, in the divine office.[7] Possibly as early as the ninth century, small congregations gathered to sing religious songs to the Virgin Mary and devote themselves to charitable activities. They came to be known as *laudesi* from the laude they sang. The lauda gradually acquired independence from the liturgical context, but it was only in the thirteenth century that the genre achieved its own literary status, as the vernacular increasingly replaced Latin as its principal language. The birthplace of the lauda in Italian was Umbria, the region of Iacopone.[8] In 1233, "the year of Hallelujah," numerous groups of penitents crowded the roads of central and northern Italy, drawn by the examples of Giovanni da Vicenza, Benedetto,

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[5] For the definition of the *tenson* as "a debate between two poets, or with a poet versus an imaginary opponent," see J.A. Cuddon, *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 4th edition (Harmondsworth, 1991), p. 960.

[6] Francis of Assisi's "Canticle of Brother Sun" belongs in the genre, since its principal purpose consisted of "praising God," which represents the original, etymological meaning of "lauda." The "Canticle of Brother Sun" is Iacopone's glorious antecedent.

[7] An excellent introduction to the development of the lauda in Italian literature is offered by Giulio Bertoni, "La lirica religiosa," in *Storia della letteratura italiana. Il Duecento*, ed. Giulio Bertoni (Milan, 1954), pp. 213–236. Meticulously detailed information on the rise of the lauda to a literary genre is provided by Emilio Pasquini, "La lauda," *Il Duecento: Dalle origini a Dante* I, eds. Emilio Pasquini and Antonio Enzo Quaglio (Bari, 1970), pp. 479–548. For the liturgical aspect of the lauda, see Mario Righetti, *Storia liturgica* 2 (Milano, 1955), pp. 407–408.

[8] The Umbrian origin of the lauda is theorized by Arnaldo Fortini, *La lauda in Assisi e le origini del teatro italiano* (Assisi, 1961), p. 7.

and other religious leaders, who had issued a call to conversion in view of the significant twelve-hundredth anniversary of the death of Christ. These penitents sang very simple laude in the vernacular as they walked the length of the Italian peninsula entreating others to repent. The name "lauda," which originally referred to praising songs in Latin or in the vernacular, was also applied to these songs of repentance. A second wave of religious fervor swept across northern and central Italy between 1258 and 1260, following the call to contrition initiated by the Perusian Ranieri Fasani and his Flagellant Movement. Inspired by Joachim of Flora's apocalyptic calculations regarding the imminent coming of the era of the Spirit, the Flagellants, together with other, more or less spontaneous groups known as Disciplinati and Battuti, walked and sang laude along the roads of Italy, while scourging their semi-naked bodies as a sign of penance for the remission of sins. Alessandro D'Ancona views the lauda as the popular, proletarian counterpart of the solemn liturgical hymn, and attributes its wide dissemination to the spreading of the Flagellant Movement in the second half of the thirteenth century. For D'Ancona, the Flagellants' combination of walking, singing, and scourging also represents the seed of theatrical representation in the Italian tradition.[9] Some of Iacopone's laude clearly belong in this dramatic and prayerful strain.

The vernacular lauda was a rather primitive poetic form. Its inelegant, rough quality granted it a crucial position as a means of spiritual and moral growth among the lower classes. What the mendicant movements did on a sociological level, the lauda did on a catechetical level. The advent of the mendicant movements, later formalized in the two main mendicant orders, the Dominicans and the Franciscans, helped to fill the wide gap that existed between the official ecclesiastical hierarchy and the uneducated, illiterate congregations. Likewise, the lauda provided a form of prayer both accessible and comprehensible to the majority of the people and, while serving as a penitential chant, it was a much-needed instrument of spiritual elevation and instruction. In this sense, the limited literary value of the lauda accompanied one of its main merits, since simplicity increased its accessibility.

It is thanks to Iacopone's *canzoniere* that the vernacular lauda rises from its status as worthless popular song to a widely acclaimed poetic

[9] Alessandro D'Ancona, *Origini del teatro italiano* 1 (Turin, 1891), pp. 112–116.

genre, with an acknowledged position in the literary, cultural, and spiritual canons.[10] In the hands of Iacopone the genre of lauda loses its strictly praising or repentant purposes and becomes a malleable religious poetic medium. Although not all, a good number of Iacopone's poems are prayerful texts. Their prayerfulness covers a wide range of topics and forms. In some cases the text's prayerfulness finds expression in a reflection on Christian mysteries. A perfect example is the notable "Donna de Paradiso," Lauda 93, the lauda on Christ's Passion and crucifixion, whose dialogic structure permits its production on stage and makes it an instrument of instruction for illiterate Christians.[11] Other poems are petitionary prayers, such as Lauda 27, titled "The Soul Cries out for Help against the Senses," in which the poetic voice invokes God as love and asks forgiveness for his past disobedience and mistakes. Numerous laude in Iacopone's collection reveal their prayerfulness in the form of a request to God to convey his love to the soul. These are grouped in the second half of the *canzoniere* and focus thematically on mystical union between Anima, the Soul, and Christ-the-Bridegroom, who are to be conjoined in matrimony. In one case, Iacopone's emphasis on prayer centers on the "Our Father," the most important Christian prayer; the commentary resulting from the poet's thoughts on it creates an interesting meta-linguistic text, which is not necessarily prayerful in itself, but an invitation to reevaluate and reflect on a well-known prayer of the Christian tradition.[12]

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[10] Elizabeth Leeker, *Die Lauda. Entwicklung einer italienischen Gattung zwischen Lyrik und Theater* (Tübingen, 2003) considers Iacopone da Todi as indisputably the best known representative and almost the essence of the genre: "Eng verbunden mit dem Begriff der Lauda ist der Name von Jacopone da Todi, der unbestritten als bekanntester Vertreter . . . dieser Gattung gilt." [Tightly connected with the concept of the lauda is the name of Jacopone da Todi, who can indisputably be considered the most well-known representative . . . of the genre] (271). Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are by the author of this article.

[11] The numbering of the laude follows the *editio princeps*, assembled in Florence in 1490 by an anonymous redactor and published by Francesco Bonaccorsi. The Italian edition used for the present study is Jacopone da Todi, *Le Laudi*, ed. Luigi Fallacara (Florence, 1976), which by admission of its editor reproduces the Bonaccorsi Edition. The translation is by Serge and Elizabeth Hughes, *Jacopone da Todi. The Lauds* (New York, 1982). Despite its lack of poeticity and its frequent liberties in rendering the original texts, the Hugheses' translation remains the only complete English version of the *Laude* and therefore has been an unavoidable reference-point for this study.

[12] This is Lauda 44 in the Bonaccorsi Edition.

In all cases, Iacopone's prayerful rhetoric corresponds to the general and schematic definition of prayer as a "dialogue with or about God," in which the term "dialogue" regains its full etymological significance as "logos" passing "through" the supplicant (this is the meaning of the Greek preposition *diá*, through), in a mysterious and mystical exchange between the two entities involved, God and human being.[13] In the Judeo-Christian tradition, prayer is the answer to the breach of communication between human beings and God caused by the Fall out of Earthly Paradise. The mythical, idyllic atmosphere of Eden had been characterized by perfect communion with divinity, which therefore had required no other means of contact between the two entities present. After the loss of unmediated contact between God and human beings due to the Fall, prayer represents the dutiful attempt to restore such harmony and union.

The core of Iacopone's message finds itself at the intersection of poetry and prayer. His poetic spirituality expresses itself through many different rhetorical strategies and devices. The poet never evades religious subjects: in some cases, he displays petulant didacticism and preaching tones; in others, he deploys rhetorical devices in order to circumvent the ineffability of spiritual arguments and attain poetic sublimity. In the *Laude* there is an insistence on nudity as its privileged paradigm, the use of erotic figures of speech as the only satisfactory representation of divine love for human beings, and music as restoration of primeval, archetypal harmony of mankind with God and nature.

Nudity and Sexual Union

Nudity recurs as an unrelenting topos in the *Laude*. It appears in tight connection with its opposite, clothes, to construct a convoluted metaphorical dynamic. The frequent use of these metaphors should

[13] For a definition of prayer as "dialogue," see the following studies on the subject: "Preghiera" in *Nuovo dizionario di spiritualità*, eds. Stefano De Fiores and Tullio Goffi (Milan, 1989), p. 1261; "Preghiera" in *Nuovo dizionario di teologia biblica*, eds. Pietro Rossano, Gianfranco Ravasi, and Antonio Girlanda (Milan, 1988), p. 1229; "Preghiera" in *Enciclopedia delle religioni* (Florence, 1972), p. 1770; "Preghiera cristiana" in *Grande dizionario delle religioni*, ed. Paul Puopard (Casale Monferrato, 1988), p. 1650; Jean Leclercq, "Teologia e preghiera," *La preghiera nella bibbia e nella tradizione patristica e monastica*, eds. Cipriano Vagaggini and Gregorio Penco (Rome, 1964), pp. 954–957.

not induce generalizations on its overall significance in the collection. The terms of opposition, nudity/clothes or dressing/undressing, are not crystallized into a single equation whose meaning never changes. Their referent constantly shifts; it may be interpreted positively in one poem and negatively in another. Both oppositions, nudity versus garments and dressing versus undressing, may be literal and metaphorical, depending on the context. The positive qualities of material nudity and undressing, with the subsequent casting of a shadow over clothes and dressing, punctuate the entire collection. Literal nudity often features in Iacopone as implicitly referring to the typically Franciscan virtue of poverty. Nudity as poverty occurs, for example, in Lauda 23: "Veniste a noi co pellegrino,—nudo, povero e tapino/menato en questo camino,—pianto fo el primo cantare" ("Poor, naked, and wretched pilgrim,/Your first song was a sob and a wail./You came to this world with nothing at all"). Nakedness as symbol of wretchedness originates the first song in the form of a desperate cry—which is, in Iacoponian terms, a form of prayer. When spiritual matters are discussed, the metaphorical opposition is overturned: nudity signifies absence of spiritual strength and clothing its auspicious contrary. Nudity opposed to clothing is an ambiguous phenomenon in Iacopone's work and each case speaks for itself. Nakedness may bear positive connotations when it refers to poverty, but it may also carry negative significance if it implies an absence of God. On the other hand, the covering of clothing may indicate a form of material riches to be avoided, but also the necessary spiritual apparatus of the ascetic.

Lauda 42 is a pivotal text in Iacopone's collection. It combines the theme of nakedness and clothing with an erotic metaphor to account in poetic words for the ineffable love uniting human beings and God. Consistent with the common definition of prayer as dialogue, Lauda 42 is structured in the form of a verbal exchange, in which the Angels instruct Anima, the Soul, to abandon all worldly possessions and secular mentality, if she wants to become united with Christ, her Beloved. This allegorized rendition of a mystical union acquires the connotations of wedding preparations. Anima must "take off" her mundane habits, her lurid and smelly clothes ("abiti," "habits," is a useful, ambiguous term referring at once to her clothes and to her habitual ways), before she can approach her Bridegroom. The emphasis is on removing unsuitable garments, on stripping naked, rather than on wearing appropriate clothes for the encounter. Such

is the insistence on the topos of clothing and unclothing that words indicating this theme occur six times in the crucial twelve lines of the poem:

—Non te lassamo entrare;—iurato l'avem presente
che nullo ce può transire—ch'aia veste splacente;
e tu hai veste fetente,—l'odore n'ha conturbato.
—Qual è 'l vestir ch'i' aggio—el qual me fa putigliosa?
ch'io lo voglio gettare—per esser a Dio graziosa,
e como deventi formosa—lo core n'ho 'nanemato.
—Ora te spoglia del mondo—e d'onne fatto mondano;
tu n'èi molto encarcata,—el cor non porti sano;
par che l'aggi sí vano—del mondo ove se' conversato.
—Del mondo ch'agio 'l vestire—vegente voi, me ne spoglio;
e nul encarco mondano—portare meco più voglio;
ed omne creato ne toglio—ch'io en core avesse albergato.
[You may not enter. We have sworn to open
Only to those with spotless robes;
Yours are lurid and smell to the heavens.
If they do, then off with them!
O heart of mine, sustain me,
That I might see Him again.
Strip yourself of the world,
And of every worldly love;
A dead weight they are, an illness, a vanity.
Here in your sight I strip myself,
And put aside the love of all created things—
May they no longer have a place in my heart.]

The lines that follow further insist on the necessity for the Soul to strip off the world. Being unprepared for the encounter with Christ due to not wearing an adequate outfit brings to mind the parable of the banquet and the guests called to partake in it in the Gospel of Matthew, a possible genealogical matrix for Lauda 42.[14] The metaphorical implications of both texts are quite clear. Appearing at the encounter with inelegant clothes leads to merciless punish-

[14] Gospel of Matthew 22:10–14: "[T]he wedding hall was filled with guests. When the king came in to look at the guests he noticed one man who was not wearing a wedding garment, and said to him, 'How did you get in here, my friend, without a wedding garment?' And the man was silent. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and throw him into the darkness outside, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.' For many are invited but not all are chosen." *The New Jerusalem Bible*, 2nd edition (New York, 1990), p. 1645.

ment. To avoid rejection, Anima must leave behind her soiled outfit, representing worldliness, and find a suitable white attire, symbolic of her purity. The ultimate metaphorical assumption regarding nakedness as purity occurs at the conclusion of the poem, when nakedness becomes the prelude to physical union and matrimonial consummation between the two lovers. If Anima desires to be joined with Christ, she must disrobe completely and ascend the cross with him naked. The cross is their bed, on which they will become one. Anima's long conversation with Angels occupies the majority of Lauda 42, but in the last portion of the poem the dialogue takes place between Anima and Christ, as they announce their mystical union by means of an erotic metaphor:

> —Alma, poi ch'èi venuta—respondote volontire:
> la croce è lo mio letto,—là 've te poi meco unire;
> sacci, si vogli salire,—haveráme po' albergato.
> —Cristo amoroso, e io voglio—en croce nudo salire;
> E voglioce abracciato—Signor, teco morire;
> Gaio seram' a patire,—morir teco abracciato.
> [Soul, since you have come to Me,
> Gladly will I answer you. Come,
> See, this is My bed—the cross.
> Here we will be one. Come to Me
> And I will quench your thirst.
> O my Love, naked will I scale that cross,
> To suffer and to die with You.
> Lord, clasped close in Your embrace,
> In joy will I suffer and die].

Anima and Christ will unite on the bed, metaphorically represented by the cross. The nakedness of Christ on the cross at the culminating moment of his death appropriately prepares for the erotic metaphor that follows. Likewise, the cross as climactic locus of the love that leads to Christ's rescue of human beings fits the correspondence with the bed as the place of the two lovers' highest expression of love. Utmost passion is reached thereon, thanks to a paradoxical coincidence of extreme pleasure and extreme suffering.

The poet can only account for the ecstasy of mystical union with God by use of metaphors, which are the only rhetorical tool to circumvent the ineffability of such rare religious occurrence. The Iacoponian language of prayer peculiarly deploys the opposition nudity vs. clothing to account for the intricate dynamics between presence and absence of God; in this sense, the contrast substitutes

the more typical opposition of light and darkness, which metonymically describes the presence or absence of God in traditional mystical writing. In other instances, nudity prepares the way for a metaphorical sexual union as representative of closeness to God.

Silence and the *vita contemplativa* vs. words and the *vita activa*

The poet's achieved closeness to God leads to reflections on the inadequacy of language to convey the effects love has produced on his soul. Recurring to ineffability would be an expected rhetorical escape when reporting the experience of the Third Heaven. At times Iacopone employs apophatic theology, which teaches that divinity is outside the realm of human discourse. Reflections on language and silence occur throughout Iacopone's *canzoniere*. His awareness of pushing the limits of poetic rhetoric expresses itself with frequent references to language, usually in order to stress its restricted, partial abilities, if not its absolute powerlessness. Silence, as the opposite of linguistic formulations, occurs in his poetry in more than one manifestation. Silence as a form of prayer leading to contemplation is a much-invoked practice in the *Laude*. Iacopone recommends silence, for example, to aspiring candidates to the mystical experience.[15] Lauda 38 contrasts the pleasurable practice of silence and contemplation with the necessity to lead an active life and do good works, which deprive the religious of their peacefulness; and the poet himself indicates the contradiction between the two religious practices:

> Piaceme lo silenzio,—bàilo de la quiete;
> lo bene de Dio arlegame—e tolleme *silete*;
> demoro infra le prelia,—non ce saccio schirmete,
> a non sentir ferete—alta cosa me pare.
> [I bask in silence, the guardian of tranquility,
> But doing God's work robs me of that silence.

[15] Mario Casella makes the following remarks on silence and words in Iacopone's prayerful poems: "[Iacopone] era allora giunto. . . . a quegli ultimi gradi dell'esperienza mistica, quando la preghiera si fa muta e il cuore trepida in una aspettazione gioiosa e nel silenzio sacro risuonano misteriosamente le parole di Dio." [So {Iacopone} had reached . . . those highest stages of mystical experience, when prayer becomes silent and the heart shivers in joyous expectation and God's words resound mysteriously in sacred silence]. "Iacopone da Todi," *Archivium Romanicum* 4.3 (1920), p. 307.

How can I defend myself
Against the onslaught of contradictions?
It is triumph enough not to feel the wounds!]

The internal battle between a pleasurable, quiet life and the imperative call to perform good works mirrors the theological impasse that contrasts the *vita contemplativa* to the *vita activa*, originating in the evangelical account of Mary and Martha (Gospel of Luke 10:38–42). In Iacopone's figuration, the opposition becomes a cruel battle, which regularly injures the poet. But the fierce personal combat between action and contemplation is simply a passing stage; subsequently ascetic maturity instructs the religious on actions that draw their origin from contemplation, and the two coexist quite peacefully. In approaching the middle of the collection, in Lauda 47, the reader finds a long instructive section on the importance of knowing when to practice silence and when to use words to proclaim God's greatness; the ascetic importance of silence should not deter the religious from employing words to praise him. The blurry confines of silence and words are delineated in a dialogue between the poet and the Enemy, suggesting the risks that both phenomena may represent for the ascetic, who is constantly called to discriminate between good silence/bad speech and good speech/bad silence.[16] This is how the contrast is formulated in Lauda 47:

—Un defetto par che agi—del silenzio del tacere,
multi santi per quiete—nel deserto volser gire.
Se tu, frate, non parlassi—sirì a edificazione,
molta gente convertèra—ne la tua amirazione.
La Scrittura en molte parte—lo tacere ha commendato,
e la lengua spesse volte—fa cader l'omo en peccato.
—Tu me par che dichi vero,—se bon zelo te movesse;
en altra parte voi ferire—s'io a tua posta tacesse.
Lo tacere è vizioso—chello o' l'om déi parlare:
lo tacer lo ben de Dio—quando el deve annunziare.
Lo tacer ha 'l suo tempo,—el parlar ha sua stagione
curre omo questa vita—fin a consumazione.
["One more flaw in you: you do not practice silence.
In its holy name many saints went into the desert.
How edifying, Brother, if you were to practice the art—

[16] According to Gaetano Trombatore, dialogue in Iacopone's *Laude* is a rhetorical device that often represents the contrast inside the poet's conscience. "Iacopone da Todi e le sue laude," *Saggi critici* (Florence, 1950), p. 30.

How many would admire you and turn to God!
Scripture, you know, commends silence,
Since the tongue often leads man to sin."
"If you were speaking out of holy zeal,
What you say would be true.
But you want to persuade me to be silent
For your own unworthy ends.
When we ought to speak out, silence is a sin,
As when we fail to proclaim the goodness of God.
There is a time for silence and a time for speech,
And this holds true until the very last"].

The Enemy knowingly quotes Scripture, as he does when tempting Christ in the desert (Matt. 4:1–11, Mark 1:12–13, Luke 4:1–3). Iacopone's line "[t]here is a time for silence and a time for speech" appears to echo the dichotomous separation of time according to the Book of Ecclesiastes (3:7), "a time for keeping silent,/a time for speaking." Both have a crucial function in religious life. Silence is an edifying practice when it strengthens the search for God and increases knowledge of divinity, but it may become a sinful excuse to eschew witnessing to one's faith with charitable words. Likewise, speech reveals two sides. On one hand, it proclaims "the goodness of God" and helps to attest to the new covenant of Incarnation and resurrection; on the other hand, it may serve as foul instrument of destruction and calumny.

The *Laude* exalts silence as a virtuous ascetic practice. Iacopone conveys the message that the prayerful exercise of silent contemplation has the mysterious result of increased closeness to God and, eventually, although only infrequently, mystical union. The insistence on silence often hides the topos of ineffability and the expedient of speechlessness becomes a synonym for the impossible account of divine experience. Silencing (himself or the text) often references Iacopone's resolution to express ineffability; announcing that words are useless equals the presence of God. At the opening of the collection, in Lauda 2, the presence of divinity itself "chops the poet's tongue" ("la lengua m'han mozzata") and provokes silence as a reaction. In this lauda, which is dedicated to Mary's motherly role, there are no adequate expressions to describe the sensations Mary felt while performing caring actions for her Son. Although naturally maternal, her nursing occupations were rendered unutterable when sanctified by the Infant's divine nature. Lauda 37 stresses that language cannot suitably speak of the virtue of chastity: "la mia lengua

è mancheza—de parlarne con vuce" ("I falter when I try to speak of you"). In Lauda 38 Iacopone cuts his poetic rhythm short, with an action that may be interpreted as silencing his own poetic text. The poem concludes with a self-referential device pointing out the abbreviation of his text, which may be perceived as inability to persevere on the theme: "abbrevio miei ditta—'n questo loco finare" (I abridge my speech—I must conclude here).[17] Self-censorship occurs here not as a realization of Iacopone's own exceeding but as an acknowledgment of the superiority of silence over speech in the mystical/poetic realm.

Silence as the inexpressible presence of divinity occurs more frequently in the final portion of the collection, to indicate the all-encompassing mystical union between human beings and God. When confronted with matrimonial consummation between Anima and Christ, the poet finds no fitting imagery to capture in words the aftermath of ecstatic union. Even metaphorical, poetic language fails its mission. The human instrument of rhetoric offers only a glimpse of it, while the larger portion of such experience remains concealed behind the screen of ineffability.

Harmonia as Goddess of Love

The poems in the second half of the *Laude* consider the discovery of melodic language as the sole medium that can, although insufficiently, manifest the otherwise unsayable entity of God and the ineffable experience of encountering him in the prayerful practice. A cluster of poems, located strategically at the center of Iacopone's collection, investigates the concept of music as closeness to divinity. The texts contained between Lauda 59 and Lauda 64 bring together poverty, divine love, physical suffering, and the teachings of Saint Francis as conceptual elements to account for a recovered harmony.

Harmony is the peaceful atmosphere uniting human beings to their environment and to God as it was before sin. In human terms, harmony is translated into melodic sound and music. It distinguishes

[17] The translation of this line is mine. The Hugheses' translation renders this line with "Each of the blades cutting into me./Enough!," which fails to give a sense of the poet's self-reflection on language.

creation at its beginning and characterizes the biblical Earthly Paradise before the human Fall. In the post-edenic world, harmony may be perceived by human beings only after they purify their perception. The music of the spheres, the melody of the universe in motion, cannot be heard by human beings because of their involvement in worldly occupations, but it is audible to the attentive listener of godly matters. In medieval philosophy the concept of harmony occupies the space of music. Music and harmony are one and the same discipline, although they are articulated in a complex structure comprising numerous ramifications.

In the Middle Ages, *musica* is a much more comprehensive discipline than present-day music. It is subdivided into various branches, one of which is melodic acoustic sound produced by musical instruments and voice, the others being more theoretical and philosophical conceptualizations linking *musica* to cosmic melodic harmony and human spiritual peace. *Musica* signifies a transcendental order reachable through theoretical speculation; it is a *theoria* in the true, strong sense of "contemplation."[18] *Musica* is a combination of different elements. It refers to the balanced interaction of divinity with nature and human beings, as well as to the realm of music as acoustic, melic sound. The name *musica* identifies one of the disciplines of the curriculum as it was established by the tradition of learning transmitted by Martianus Capella in his *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*. Harmony, or music, is the last of the seven *artes*. The three disciplines of the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic) constitute the "allegory of words;" the four of the *quadrivium* (geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and harmony) allow a perspective of the created world as paralleling the divine world and constitute an "allegory of things."[19] Music as a *quadrivium* subject was not simply acoustic melody and enjoyable sound; it was first of all a mathematical science based on

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[18] This is how Roger Dragonetti defines music: "le mot *musica* n'a pas désigné d'abord la pratique de l'art musical, mais un ordre transcendant qu'on approche par la spéculation théorique, à savoir par la *theoria* au sens fort de 'contemplation.'" [The word *musica* has never before designated the practice of musical art, but a transcendental order one can approach thanks to theoretical speculation, that is, thanks to *theory* in the strong sense of "contemplation"]. "Le mariage des arts au Moyen Age." *La musique et les lettres. Études de littérature médiévale* (Geneva, 1986), p. 59.

[19] This perspective on the *trivium* and the *quadrivium* as an "allegory of words" and an "allegory of things" respectively has been proposed by D.W. Robertson, *A Preface to Chaucer: Studies in Medieval Perspectives* (Princeton, 1962), p. 297.

numbers and numerical correspondences.[20] It hinged on philosophical speculation and elaborate hypotheses, which were intended to establish symmetries between the physical and the meta-physical realms, *physis* and *meta-physis*, the world below and divinity above. The two realms reflect each other, since divinity originated creation after impressing its mark on it.[21] The oneness of God mirrors the multiplicity of creation. The Latin term *uni-versus* reproduces in its etymology the returning movement of all creation toward that single goal, the unicity from which it originated.[22] One divinity created the multiplicity of the cosmos which, in its turn, moves back to it. The ascending path of learning in the *quadrivium* leads from geometry, through the science of numbers (arithmetic), up to the application of mathematical calculations to stars, planets, and celestial spheres (astronomy), and finally reaches the most celestial and cosmic of all sciences (harmony), a true match for divine perfection.[23] Harmony occupies the last position in the *quadrivium*, as *septima ars* in the ascending order established by Martianus Capella. The echelon reproduces a gradual distancing from *physis* in order to approach the less physical and more celestial realm of harmony. The "allegory of things" in the *quadrivium* departs from the most terrestrial of the arts, geometry, and detaches itself incrementally from the study of the physical world to the more ethereal and rarified atmosphere of the heavens. Martianus's harmony governs the movements of the entire universe from within and every relation among celestial bodies themselves. In his mythological creation, *Harmonia*, being the daughter of Venus, is herself a love-goddess, the divinity of reconciliation and pervasive order, the basis for accomplishing unity in a polymorphous

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[20] Music and mathematics are defined as "sister disciplines" in Kay Brainerd Slocum, "*Speculum Musicae*: Jacques de Liège and the Art of Musical Number," *Medieval Numerology. A Book of Essays*, ed. Robert Surles (New York, 1993), p. 11.

[21] For the concept of liberal arts in the Middle Ages and their relation to the spiritual and religious realm, see Russell A. Peck, "Number as Cosmic Language," *By Things Seen: Reference and Recognition in Medieval Thought*, ed. David L. Jeffrey (Ottawa, 1979), p. 65.

[22] The complex relation of singularity to multiplicity as mirror of the rapport linking divinity to creation is explained by Roger Dragonetti, "Le mariage des arts au Moyen Age," *La musique et les lettres. Études de littérature médiévale*, pp. 61–62.

[23] This is the sequence of the arts of the *quadrivium* as it appears in Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis*. Other philosophers change the order and begin the sequence with arithmetic, since numbers are considered the basis and foundation of everything else, and geometry a consequence of numerical order.

cosmos. The role of harmony surpasses in importance all other arts in *De nuptiis*. Harmony represents the arrival point of the *quadrivium*, as well as occupying the ninth and last book of Martianus's work, the section which summarizes the treatise of the arts, a fundamental milestone for medieval learning.

Music as melodic sound occupies only a small section of the discipline known as harmony. The two chief treatises on music in ancient Christianity confirm the theological and philosophical nature of the discipline, which finds itself on the cusp of the physical and the metaphysical dimensions. In his *De musica*, St. Augustine summarizes music as *scientia bene modulandi*, "the science of modulating well." His definition emphasizes the scientific nature (*scientia*) of music, the ethical imprint deriving directly to it from God (*bene*), and the measured, balanced, and consonant movement inherent to it, since *modulandi* comes from *modus*, measure. Unification of earthly and heavenly elements creates a harmonious melody, which is succinctly accounted for in Augustine's *De musica*: "terrestrial things are subject to celestial, and their time-circuits join together in harmonious (*numerosa*) succession for the song of the universe (*quasi carmini universitatis*)."[24] The "song of the universe" refers to the harmonious kinesis of the cosmos. The constant movement of the universe produces a melodic sound, which remains imperceptible to unworthy humans. The selected ascetic few, who are granted the gift of hearing it, may reproduce its melody and rhythm by emulating it in song and poetry. Mystics, especially those who also compose poetry, possess special skills that allow them a more immediate imitation of the harmonic sounds of the universe in motion.

Severinus Boethius's *De institutione musica* explains more rationally and systematically the Platonic idea of music as a mirror of cosmic order.[25] His treatise "became the standard medieval authority" on music and a reference text for philosophers and theologians. Its

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[24] St. Augustine, *De musica*, 6.11.29. Quoted and translated by Bruce R. Smith, "The Contest of Apollo and Marsyas: Ideas about Music in the Middle Ages," in *By Things Seen: Reference and Recognition in Medieval Thought*, ed. David L. Jeffrey (Ottawa, 1979), pp. 90–92.

[25] Hans Urs von Balthasar describes Boethius's concept of music as harmony in the following manner: "[T]he Platonic music becomes the redeeming mediator leading disordered pleasure to ethically-harmonious joy." *The Glory of the Lord. A Theological Aesthetics*. 4. *The Realm of Metaphysics in Antiquity*, trans. Brian McNeil, Andrew Louth, John Saward, Rowan Williams, and Oliver Davies; ed. John Riches (San Francisco, 1989), p. 331.

influence overflowed from the philosophical into the literary realm.[26] Boethius distinguishes three types of music, which combine speculative notions with acoustic elements:

> The first type is the music of the universe (*musica mundana*), the second type, that of the human being (*musica humana*), and the third type is that which is created by certain instruments (*musica instrumentalis constituta*), such as the kithara, or tibia or other instruments which produce melodies.[27]

Boethius's broad understanding of music as universal harmony encompasses parallel correspondences that are in themselves harmonious. *Musica mundana* describes the "music of the spheres, the rhythm of the season, the harmonious combination of elements."[28] It is the music of the cosmos, the perfect alternation of seasons and the agreement of compounded elements. *Musica humana* refers to "the harmony of body and soul, the accord of rational and irrational within the soul and of the diverse elements within the body."[29] This type of music derives from the perception of a correspondence between the external order of the cosmos and mankind's internal harmony, both in the soul and in the body. The balance and measure of things within match those of things without; the natural rules governing the outside world apply to the inside world. *Musica instrumentalis*, a human artifact, emulates the harmony of the first two types; voice and instruments take the consonance of the universe and of creatures as their models.

The Boethian concept of music applies to the Franciscan theological paradigm. The notion of music as an audible perception of a transcendental order of nature, of human spirituality, and of instrumental or vocal sound agrees with the Franciscan idea of creation in relation to divinity. To a greater extent than other Christian movements and Orders, Franciscanism at its inceptive steps shows a particular sensitivity to the natural world and attempts a rediscovery of its harmony and beauty. Francis believed that the perfection of nature reflects the flawlessness of divinity. Such perfection, marred by the human Fall in Earthly Paradise, is reinstated by Christ's redemption. Harmonious musical sound is a reminder and demonstration

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[26] Smith, "The Contest of Apollo and Marsyas," p. 92.

[27] Severinus Boethius, *The Principles of Music. An Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*, ed. and trans. Calvin Martin Bower (Ann Arbor, 1967), pp. 44–47.

[28] Smith, "The Contest of Apollo and Marsyas," p. 92.

[29] Smith, "The Contest of Apollo and Marsyas," p. 92.

of the renewed state of perfection in nature and mankind. The Franciscan revisitation of the edenic account involves the reestablishment of such equilibrium.

Music and Prayer in Iacopone's *Laude*

In Iacopone's collection, Lauda 59 and Lauda 64 constitute a poetic duo that investigates first cosmic creation (Lauda 59) and then the moment of re-creation through the Incarnation (Lauda 64). The two laude circumscribe a group of texts devoted to the celebration of renewed harmony: Lauda 60 persists on the idea of poverty as crucial to attaining wisdom, peace, and closeness to God; Lauda 61 and Lauda 62 investigate the effects of radical poverty on its most loyal follower, Saint Francis, who received the seven visions of the cross (Lauda 61) and the gift of the stigmata (Lauda 62) as reward for his faithful poverty.

Lauda 59 takes inspiration from poverty, the characteristic Franciscan virtue, revealing that the choice of utter poverty means, in fact, possessing the entire world and the harmony governing it. In this poem, abandoning greedy possessiveness allows the poet a sacramental consideration of all creation. In a geographic, topographic, and cosmological crescendo, Iacopone lists regions, countries, earthly elements, and even heavenly bodies belonging to the kingdom of the poor. By materially renouncing all possessions, the poor inherit the spiritual property of universal riches. Creation is considered, according to Francis's teaching, as the tangible sign and perceptible sacrament of divine presence; its harmony is a symptom of God's order and the perfection that originated it. The melody comes from beyond the world—from God himself. The poet's melodic skills originate from beyond the sun, the moon, the stars, and the heavens; they come to him directly from God:

> Luna, sole, cielo e stelle—fra miei tesor non son covelle,
> de sopra cielo sì son quelle—che tengon la mia melodia.
> Poi che Dio ha 'l mio velle,—possessor d'ognecovelle,
> le mie ale on tante penne—de terra en cielo non m'è via.
> Poi el mio voler a Dio è dato,—possessor so d'ogne stato,
> en lor amor so trasformato,—ennamorata cortesia.
> [Moon and sun, sky and stars, are but minor treasures:
> The treasures that make me burst into song
> Lie beyond the sky that you can see.

Since my will is centered in God, who possesses all,
I wing with ease from earth to heaven.
Since I gave my will to God
All things are mine and I am one with them
In love, in ardent charity].

Poverty helps one to understand materiality as a gift and its harmony as a token of divine presence. Possessing poverty bestows on the poet the lightness and freedom that allow his flight toward the heavens and God, while his poetic flight has already taken him high, thanks to a melodious song inspired by God himself. Poetic musicality becomes an image for the beauty and harmony of the universe.

Lauda 59 and Lauda 64 are linked by meta-poetic and meta-musical references to Iacopone's own harmonious poetry and also by the theme of poverty as a prelude to the Incarnation. Lauda 64 highlights the importance of singing and music to celebrate Christ's birth, while metaphorizing the Nativity as a "new song," or song of the Good News. The first lauda dedicated to the virtue of poverty and the first lauda dedicated to the Incarnation are joined together by a speculation on music as universal order and melodious harmony at a crucial stage of Iacopone's *Laude*, when the lack of other means of expressions forces the poet to make recourse to music and singing. Lauda 64 takes inspiration from the Hallelujah, the joyous cry at the birth of Christ. The melic element permeates Lauda 64, the first of two texts on the Nativity (the other is Lauda 65), although music remains a meta-poetic feature, a theme, not a quality that transforms this lauda into a singable text.[30] Iacopone writes of his own poetic art and inspiration, about music and song, while composing an artifact that recalls an originally musical genre. The song for the Nativity plays meta-textually on the explosion of joyous Hallelujah the angels sung at the birth of Christ. The piercing high note at the beginning of the song is followed by a drop on the scale of octaves, which is meant as melic emulation of Christ's descent to earth, the Incarnation. Its melodious sound remains perfectly pitched throughout. Iacopone writes: "[c]otal desciso—non fo mai viso/sì ben concordato" ("[n]ever was heard/a descending scale of such exquisite melody!").

[30] In Peck's words, "[i]t becomes evident that Jacopone is writing about a song, rather than writing one." George T. Peck, *The Fool of God. Jacopone da Todi* (Tuscaloosa, 1980), p. 136.

Specific meta-textual and self-reflective references to the writing of musical scores and to the singing of this joyful song begin in the fourth stanza. Iacopone describes how the song of joy was put on paper. Each writing instrument is coupled with a symbolic element participating in the Incarnation. The notes are inscribed on parchment, the skin of Christ-the-Lamb. The connection was, of course, fitting at a time when pages were made of animal skin, usually sheep. The entire song is written on this parchment, whether it is addressed to God or to human beings: singing is indirectly named a divine art—and, by extension, music itself becomes divine. It is God's hand that wrote the notes on the staff. He is the sole teacher of music and song. He opened his merciful hand to teach fallen humans the art of music, an art that bears unsurpassed healing, harmonizing qualities, and which brings humans back to divinity—thereby reenacting the dynamics of prayer. The music he teaches them is written on the skin of his Son, the Incarnate Word, who then becomes a musical score. In the heavenly choir the Christian martyrs are the first to intone the song. They are conducted by Stephen, the first of the martyrs, and they sing matins, the office of the night. The confessors chant the second sequence, with John the Evangelist in their lead. The Holy Innocents follow with the third sequence. The Nativity is the holiday of the Infant Jesus, and the Holy Innocents enjoy the privilege of being for all time in his company. In keeping with this prayerful atmosphere, the remaining part of Lauda 64 is an invitation to all mankind to come and sing; everyone can be reconciled, thanks to the sacrifice of the musical parchment made of lambskin.

Lauda 64 is a metaphorical rendering of the mystery of the Incarnation through the medium of music. Singing and melody restore the harmony that was lost because of sin. This is the theological function of the Incarnation, and music is the lens through which the Incarnation is viewed. Its transitive function resembles the redemptive mediation inherent in the Incarnation. While rooted in the materiality of instruments and human voice, music transcends materiality itself and becomes ethereal and transcendental; it moves from physicality to metaphysics, as notes rise from the parchment staff to the sublimity of melic harmony. Thus Iacopone can state that all singing is prayerful and godly, even purely human singing, and that chant makes a fitting metaphor for the mediative function of the Incarnation.

The poet's self-reflective attitude points to his own poetry as representative of the reconciliation brought by the Incarnation; after all, Iacopone uses the genre of lauda, a musical form of poetry. In this case it is a type of *mise-en-abîme*, thanks to which Iacopone, while issuing an invitation to song, performs an act of melodic creation.

In a collection of 100 laude, Iacopone's reflection on music, being placed between Lauda 59 and Lauda 64, occupies the crucial, central section that introduces an insistence on the theme of ecstasy and divine love, which is inexpressible, unless articulated by means of extra-linguistic devices. As the *Laude* approaches its conclusion, the theoretical speculation typical of these texts transforms into practical application and the musicality of Iacopone's poetry becomes an indispensable factor to express ineffable closeness to God. Toward the end, Iacopone's poetry becomes increasingly more sublime in its attempt to circumvent the ineffability of his message.

Beyond the Limits of Poetic Rhetoric: Litanic Prayer and Ineffability

In Lauda 73 Iacopone is "possessed" by divine love and cannot resist the singing impulse of his jubilant heart. The poet is so filled with loving passion that he finds no other way to express it than in "parlando smisurato" ("outstretched speech"). Rhetoric paradoxically overflows into two extremes, stammering or singing. This particular reflection on singing combines meta-textual elements with the musicality inherent in the text. This is the lauda on love, in which Iacopone "rushes out to his fellow men in ecstatic euphoria."[31] The music within the poet becomes the music on the page.[32]

In Iacopone, the term "consonance" summarizes in its etymology the two elements of mystical harmony and music. He perceives harmony and lyrical inspiration to come directly from God, not through materiality, and reports the following concept of order as measure

[31] Peck, *The Fool of God*, p. 160.

[32] Peck writes about Lauda 73: "If a musician were to select just one of Jacopone's *laude* to set to music, this would be it. The melodious verses seem to clamor for that heightened sense of passion conveyed by music." *The Fool of God*, p. 160.

of the world as it was conveyed directly to him by Christ himself. In Lauda 90 there is an exchange of ideas between Christ and Anima regarding order and disorganization. Anima requests that Christ settle her disorderly love:

> —Tutte le cose qual aggio create,
> sì son fatte con numero e mesura,
> ed al lor fine son tutte ordenate
> conservanse per orden tal valura,
> e molto più ancora caritate
> si è ordenata nella sua natura.
> [My creation is patterned in number and measure,
> Each thing according to its purpose.
> Order maintains and sustains
> Each particular function;
> And this by its very nature,
> Is even more true of charity].

Order governs nature, thanks to number and measure. Harmony is God's own imprint on nature, which becomes perceptible to human beings through rhythm and order.

The idea of order is embodied poetically by means of litanic prayer. The alternation of voices and structures, which characterizes litany, typifies Iacopone's attempt to bridge the gap between the human realm and the divine realm. Litany alternates between repetition of a word or phrase and the mutation of the other part of the line: repetition and change alternate to form the structure of litany. While maintaining the duality of his theological outlook, as represented by a binary verse structure, Iacopone posits the function of musical litany as a solution. The mutable, constantly changing world of humans encounters the immutable, static realm of the divine. Litany reproduces in its composition the amalgamation of the two in one.

In the second half of the collection, Iacopone offers conspicuous examples of litanic scansion in the poems on love.[33] In Lauda 67

[33] According to Fernando Liuzzi, the lauda as a liturgical and literary genre was intrinsically shaped and structured in the fashion of litany. He describes laude at the time of the switch from Latin to the vernacular and emphasizes "il carattere invocante e propiziatorio, la melodia, per quanto è lecito arguire, impostata su brevi periodi ripetuti ad uno ad uno, come nella litania, o di due in due come nella sequenza." [The invoking and propitiating quality, melody, as far as one can legitimately infer, {is} structured on short phrases, repeated one by one, as in litany, or two by two, as in a sequence]. *La lauda e i primordi della melodia italiana*, 1 (Rome, 1935), p. 9.

the word "Amor" or "amore" occurs at the beginning and at the end of each verse in the first half of the poem and at the end of each verse in the second half, thereby giving shape to an unusual figure of speech that rhetoric defines as epanadiplosis, an elaborate type of anaphora.[34] The obsessive repetition of the word "love" in many different morphological endings of verb tenses and persons in Lauda 72 (thirteen times in nineteen lines) creates a monotonous rhythm comparable to litany, given that the rhyming pattern hinges on the word "ama," so that "amore" reappears in the signifier of such words as "f*ama*," "sci*ama*," or "tr*ama*," whose referents bear no connection with "love," but simply reiterate the importance of the signified "love" by means of repeating its Italian signifier *ama* in different lexical contexts. Lauda 82 features the anaphora "Se io esco per . . .," "If I come out through . . ."; and Lauda 90 relentlessly repeats "Amor, amor" at the beginning of each line in the last portion of the poem.[35]

Litany is a powerful form of prayer, whose structure combines musical, philosophical, and spiritual foundations. It alternates novelty and repetition, the unknown and the known. It is at once a mnemonic exercise and an automatic activity. Textually it is articulated in a binary scheme, consisting of two separate, consecutive parts in each line. One phrase is original, one repeated, so that it alternates between introduction of new concepts or ideas and reiteration of the most important thought or expression. The repetitive part in it quiets down human faculties; it hypnotizes the mind; it liberates the mind from the noisy and busy atmosphere of secular life, preparing it for a higher degree of prayer. Litany elevates verbal prayer to contemplative prayer, or to at least an approximation of it. The variation on a theme in the other section of litany attracts all the attention, which is refreshed by the somnolent effects of repetition. The variation serves as a liberating element. The alternation is from the constriction of repetitiveness to the liberation of innovation. In one of the few studies on litany that do not address strictly spiritual and theological issues of this form of prayer, but broaden its scope to include psychological and aesthetic considerations, Albert

[34] For the definition of "epanadiplosis," see Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik: eine Grundlegung der Literaturwissenschaft* I (Munich, 1960).

[35] The rhyming scheme of Lauda 90 is in fact even more complicated than this.

Béguin perceives the efficacy of litany in exactly its repetitive pattern. Even without considering the alternating structure of many litanic prayers, repetition itself creates an equally binary phenomenon in the mind of the person formulating it. According to Béguin's elegant articulation, repetition at once quiets the mind and focuses it on its immutable semantic content, but also conjures up all the possible variations of it; it numbs the mind and contemporaneously awakens it to a novel concentration of all faculties on the object of spiritual intuition and longing of the soul.[36] Litany, with its repetitive element, challenges the limits of temporality, breaks the boundaries of rationality, and overflows into the realm of eternity. Its rhythmic scansion creates an interruption in the pattern of temporal sequence and transforms the text into atemporal circularity.

In its fluctuation between repetition and novelty, litany constitutes a poetic pattern for Iacopone's *Laude*. Its alternating scheme resembles the poet's vacillation between silence and singing. Iacopone insists on the ineffability of the sensations inspired by divine love. Expression

[36] "L'essence de la litanie semble bien être dans ce mouvement de l'esprit que le même mot répété met dans un état particulier, plongeant dans une sorte de sommeil une part de son attention, pour attiser davantage et libérer l'autre part . . . la répétition opère ici deux effects en apparence contradictoires: tantôt elle immobilise sous la contemplation le contenu d'un terme sans cesse redit avec amour . . .; et tantôt elle fait défiler sous le regard tout ce que suggèrent les variantes ajoutées à ce premier thème permanent . . .; la répétition des mêmes syllabes endort cette vigilance que nous sommes bien forcés d'accorder aux choses de notre univers sensible; à la faveur du "sommeil" ainsi provoqué, une autre concentration s'opère: concentration de tous les pouvoirs sur l'objet propre de l'intuition spirituelle et des appétences de l'âme . . .; contrainte et délivrance; stricte signification de chaque mot, mais en même temps action suggestive de sa forme sonore; concentration de toutes les facultés sur un point unique et rayonnement jusq'aux limites du possible: telle semble bien être, en ses contrastes, l'efficacité subjective de la litanie." [The essence of litany appears to be in the movement of the mind, put in a particular state by the repetition of the same word, throwing one part of its attention into some sort of slumber, in order to further entice and set free the other part . . . here, repetition has two effects, only contradictory in appearance: at times repetition immobilizes in awe the substance of a word tirelessly and lovingly repeated . . . ; and at times, repetition conjures up all that is suggested by variations on the initial and stable topic . . . the repetition of the same syllables numbs the vigilance required from us by elements of our physical universe; thanks to the "slumber" thus induced, another concentration occurs, that is the concentration of all faculties on the very object of spiritual intuition and the longing of the soul . . .; restraint and release; the simple meaning of every word and, at the same time, a suggestive impact of the sound itself; the word concentrating all faculties on a single point, and radiating towards extreme limits: there appears to lie, in its contrasts, the subjective efficacy of litany]. Albert Béguin, *La prière de Péguy* (Neuchâtel, 1942), p. 98.

through language is at once a compromise and a necessity, insofar as the poet feels an uncontrollable urge to communicate his enthusiasm and joy for the goal he has achieved. The final poems of the *canzoniere* constantly oscillate between these alternatives. Silence would be the more truthful option, in line with both the nature of divine love and the traditional topos of its ineffability. Its alternative involves yielding to an impulse for jubilation, which results from mystical union and defies the commitment to silence. The persistent vacillation between declaring love's ineffability and attempting to circumvent it with poetic language shapes the last portion of the *Laude*. It can be found, for example, in Laude 75, 76, 77 and continues at least through Lauda 91.

The alternative to ineffability consists in stretching the limits of available language in order to provide a partial hint at the inexpressible journey to the Third Heaven the poet has undergone.[37] Iacopone employs a broad range of rhetorical and stylistic devices to express his unutterable experience.[38] Along the same lines as "parlare smesurato" ("outsized language") in Lauda 77, both Lauda 80 and Lauda 81 point in the direction of a transformed linguistic medium, which might attempt the complex task of communicating what a more logical poetic discourse would fail to express. "Esmesurato" and "esmesuranza" are two frequent terms in Iacopone's vocabulary, generally indicating a sense of oversized measure and superabundance that attempts to hint at infinity.[39] When the limits of poetic rhetoric have been reached, the next step is a recourse to music.[40]

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[37] The critic Franco Maccarini draws an interesting (although far-fetched) parallel between Iacopone's syntax and Benvenuto Cellini's: "La sua sintassi potrebbe essere paragonata a quella del Cellini essendo guidata più dal sentimento ispiratore che da una particolare logica espressiva." [His syntax might be compared to Cellini's, being prompted more by inspiring sentiment than by a particular expressive logic]. *Jacopone da Todi e i suoi critici* (Milan, 1952), p. 128.

[38] On the expression of mystical experiences in language, see Michael Huntington, who writes: "[W]e see mystics using all sorts of metaphorical, allegorical, mythical or otherwise 'stretched' types of language in their attempts to communicate their private experience," "Mysticism and the Limits of Language," in *Language in Religion*, eds. Humphrey Tonkin and Allison Armstrong Keef (Lanham, 1989), p. 41.

[39] On the obsessive recurrence of the terms "esmesuranza" and related words, see Elena Landoni, *Il "libro" e la "sentenza." Scrittura e significato nella poesia medievale: Iacopone da Todi, Dante, Cecco Angiolieri* (Milan, 1990), p. 39.

[40] The connection between the ineffability of divine experience and music as a channel of its communication is also established by Fernando Liuzzi: "Ritmi e rime, allitterazioni e insistenze, accelerazioni e progressioni sospingono [il poeta] talora,

The jubilation that inevitably results from the profound experience of meeting God inspires an instinctive, uncontrollable emission of sounds, which are not intelligible, known words.[41] They are the instinctive articulations of pleasure, testifying to the ecstatic state experienced by the poet in the course of his mystical union with the divine.

In Lauda 81, and even more in Lauda 90, the use of alliteration and rhyme is carried to such an extreme that some lines sound more like word-plays and puns than real linguistic referents. Such lines as the following, taken from Lauda 81, sound as if they were inspired by poetic mania; they flow almost uncontrollably, in rhythmic assonance, out of the mouth of the poet, who appears to have produced them unconsciously, as if under the inspiration of a poetic daemon:

> O amor amativo,—amor consumativo,
> amor conservativo—del cuor che t'ha albergato.
> [O loving Love, consuming Love,

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come assetato e invaghito di suono, a scrolli caparbi e furiosi del dettato, quasi a tentarne la resistenza sintattica e la possibilità di ribellione ai vincoli logici, quasi volesse insomma frangere costrutti e parole per liberarne un grido e spremerne un gemito. Un'aspirazione musicale ora fiera e squillante, ora estenuata e morbida, ferve dunque frequente nelle *Laudi*. Sboccò essa nel flusso rasserenante della melodia? Fu Iacopone desideroso soltanto o pure esperto di musica? Sognò solo o forse effettivamente procurò che le sue dense parole si sciogliessero e ricomponessero nella modulazione nel ritmo e nel timbro della voce alzata a cantare?" [Rhythms and rhymes, alliterations and insistences, accelerations and progressions drive {the poet}, at times, as if thirsty for and enamored with sound, to resolute and furious shakes of his style, as if testing its syntactical resistance and its possibility of rebelling against logical limits, as if he wished to break meaning and words, in order to release a cry and squeeze a groan from them. A musical inspiration, which is at times proud and piercing, at times enfeebled and soft, frequently enlivens the *Laudi*. Did it result in the placating flux of melody? Was Iacopone simply infatuated with music or else a musical expert? Did he simply dream, or did he perhaps make his dense words melt and reshape in the rhythmic modulation and in the pitch of a voice raised up to sing?]. The questions at the conclusion of Liuzzi's statements must be interpreted as rhetorical questions, especially in light of his subsequent and more specific book-length investigation of the musical quality of Iacopone's poetry. "Profilo musicale di Iacopone," *Nuova antologia. Rivista di lettere, scienze ed arti*, 279.357 (1931), p. 172.

[41] In his criticism of "Donna de Paradiso," Italo Bertelli identifies the ability to express his interior life as peculiarly Iacoponian: "proprio in questa facoltà di esprimere e di rappresentare poeticamente la propria vita interiore consiste la dote più alta e più originale di Jacopone." [Jacopone's highest and most original gift consists exactly of this ability to express and represent his interior life poetically]. *Impeto mistico e rappresentazione realistica nella poesia di Jacopone. Appunti sulla lauda "Donna de Paradiso"* (Milan, 1981), p. 27.

You fill with throbbing life
The heart that shelters You].
Amore grazioso,—amore delettoso,
amor suavetoso, che 'l core hai saziato.
[Generous Love,
Gracious Love,
Your riches are beyond imagining].
Luce luminativa,—luce demostrativa,
non viene all'amativa—chi non n'è luminato.
[Light that enlightens, light that teaches,
He who is not illuminated by You
Does not reach the fullness of Love].
Amor, lo tuo effetto—dà lume a lo 'ntelletto,
demostrali l'obietto—de l'amativo amato.
[Love, You give light
To the intellect in darkness
And illumine the Object of Love].

Words such as "amativo," "consumativo," "suavetoso," "luminativa," and "amativa" evince creativity as a result of the author's mania. Being seized by the flow of his poetic discourse, the poet strings adjectives and substantives together with no logical connection among them, and the euphoria deriving from his reminiscence of the occurred ecstasy causes words to emerge automatically in his text. This poetic operation is similar to a *devinalh*, a genre in which morphology and content value are subordinated to phonology and euphonic flow.[42] Iacopone's addition of original terms suggests the desire to transform the terminology at his disposal, in order to render with words a phenomenon that is by definition ineffable. He bends phonology to fit alliterative forms and create an original musical sound.

[42] Elena Landoni speaks of *devinalh* in relation to Iacopone: "genere del devinalh . . . [la] poesia del non-senso, in cui le parole costruiscono una realtà lirica, ma non forniscono alcun messaggio logico. In altri termini, si tratta dell'affermazione del valore formale ed espressivo del componimento poetico, e quindi il riconoscimento della sua assoluta rappresentatività, pur nell'eliminazione di ogni supporto significativo e di ogni intento comunicativo." [The genre of the devinalh . . . the poetry of non-sense, in which words build up a lyrical reality, but do not provide any logical message. In other words, it is about the affirmation of formal and expressive value of poetic composition and therefore the acknowledgement of its absolute representativeness, despite the elimination of any significant support and of any communicative intention]. *Il "libro" e la "sentenza,"* p. 22.

Conclusion

The prevalence of sound over meaning places Iacopone's poetic rhetoric closer to singing, which favors agreeable melody over the lyrics' semantics. The harmony resulting from such poetic texts, in which the sound surmounts the literal or even metaphorical significance of words, mirrors the harmony of the mystical union it portrays.[43] Language remains the indispensable means of poetic communication, but Iacopone stretches it to the limits of music and harmony, both by means of semantic creation of assonances and rhymes, and through the repetition of purely symbolic words. When faced with the challenge to account for the inexpressible encounter with divinity, Iacopone creates a very personal poetic style, which distinguishes him from any other author of his generation in the Italian literary tradition. Rather than surrendering to silence, he chooses the ethereal language of music and singing and, in accordance with Saint Augustine's aphorism *qui cantat bis orat*, he opts for melody in order to formulate his own rediscovery of a harmonious world and imitate the "language of the angels."

[43] The harmony created by the unification of words and sound is explored by Jean Brun, *L'homme et le langage* (Paris, 1985), p. 22.

JUST TALKING ABOUT GOD: ORTHODOX PRAYER AMONG THE HERETICAL BEGUINS

Louisa A. Burnham

In October 1299, an ecclesiastical council in Béziers condemned the heterodox practices of an as yet little-known religious group, the Beguins. It may seem odd to begin an article about Franciscan prayer with the account of a provincial ecclesiastical council that sanctioned heretics. But not only are the decrees of this council the very first place where we hear mention of this new sect, soon to be defined as heretical, but the story will also serve as a lesson in how difficult (or perhaps dangerous) it can be for anyone, ecclesiastical councils or ourselves, to determine the true nature of such suspect religious groups. As this article will go on to show, the grey area between heretical and orthodox that characterizes the spirituality of the Beguins of Languedoc, a spirituality that we can study using both their testimony before inquisitors and the manuscripts of spiritual texts that they created and carefully preserved, provides us with a remarkable opportunity to approach the prayer and pious practices of ordinary Franciscan laypeople.[1]

The provincial ecclesiastical council that met in Béziers in the south of France under the presiding aegis of the archbishop of Narbonne in October 1299 had a fair amount of business to discuss. One item on the agenda was providing for the celebration of the feast of the newly canonized Saint Louis of France, but there were also reports of clerics engaging in "vile arts" such as butchering, smithing, tailoring and the like, practices the council intended to quell. More importantly, however, the council was concerned about

[1] A preliminary version of this paper was presented at the 39th International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, MI in May 2004. I am grateful for the helpful comments of many colleagues present at that session. I would also like to thank the Middlebury College-C.V. Starr Schools Abroad for sponsoring my research in Tuscany and Umbria, and Professor Marco Bartoli and the Centro Studi San Giovanni da Capestrano, for inviting me to participate in the fifth Settimana di Studi Medievali in Capestrano in August 2005, where the entire team of researchers was of tremendous help and assistance.

the possibilities of heresy in the archdiocese. Not only had they heard accounts of Cathar heretics and fautors of Cathar heresy (not unsurprising in thirteenth-century Languedoc), but also and more worryingly, there were reports of a new and potentially problematic religious group that had recently made its appearance in the region.

This "cult of a new superstition" (the Council did not yet use the term "heresy" to define it) had several distinctive characteristics. Adherents of both sexes vowed chastity, wore distinctive clothing, and went about proclaiming that the end of the world was near, and the time of Antichrist had come (or almost—"*vel quasi*"). Though learned members of "a laudable *religio*, rightly approved among others" were associated with them (no doubt a reference to Franciscans), the council was especially concerned that the un-learned among them were also preaching. They gathered at night, the Council had heard, in mysterious conventicles where they had rites that seemed to differ somewhat from those that were approved. In their own defense, the members of this group said that when they met together, they were not *preaching* at all, but merely "talking about God." By the end of the council, it was decided to condemn and prohibit the activities of this suspicious group.[2]

If we listen to the decrees of the provincial council, this was a dangerous assembly of possible heretics, whose proselytizing activities were to be discouraged, and even punished. If we listen to the members of the group themselves, they were simply a pious association of Franciscan associates who gathered together weekly "to talk about God." Who were they really? The provincial council tells us that "*vulgariter*" they were known locally as "Beguins."

The name "beguin" was neither new to Languedoc in 1299 nor, of course, exclusively associated with this group. The beguines of northern Europe, pious women who lived collectively in beguinages like the celebrated Béguinage of Bruges are far more famous.[3] And

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[2] "Concilium Provinciale Anno M. CC. XCIX. Biterris celebratum sub Ægidio Narbonensi archiepiscopo," eds. E. Martène and M. Durand, *Thesaurus novus anecdotorum* (Paris, 1717), vol. IV, columns 225–228. The acts of the council also note that many of these Beguins had taken vows of virginity or chastity, but that these vows "were known to have been violated." This kind of accusation is common in the rhetoric against heretical groups; Olivi himself used it against the Cathars. David Burr, *Olivi's Peaceable Kingdom* (Philadelphia, 1993), p. 89.

[3] See Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200–1565* (Philadelphia, 2001), especially pp. 121–132.

in Languedoc, the word had become common currency for members of the Franciscan Third Order, at least since the publication of Pope Nicholas IV's rule for that order in 1289.[4] But "beguin" was also used locally in a slightly different manner: the controversial Franciscan theologian Peter Olivi, himself from Sérignan near Béziers, used it in a letter to the captive sons of Charles of Anjou in 1295, when he worried that their father might think he was trying to "beguinize" them, that is, indoctrinate them with questionable ideas about Franciscan poverty, and especially its apocalyptic implications.[5] In Languedoc, as the acts of the council clearly attest, the word "beguin" was code for such problematic ideas, and it is surely not accidental that the council took up the problem little more than a year after Peter Olivi completed his commentary on the book of Revelation in 1297, and his death in March 1298. Olivi's Apocalypse commentary, soon translated into the vernacular, became very nearly a second scripture for the Beguins of Languedoc, and Olivi himself was widely venerated as an as-yet uncanonized saint.[6] His followers, usually known as the "Spiritual Franciscans," were easily distinguished from their less radical confreres by their torn and tattered habits, which they wore in imitation of Saint Francis, and in their dogged pursuit of Olivi's ideas regarding *usus pauper*, or "poor use."[7]

Less than twenty years later, the Beguins of Languedoc were again on the agenda of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. After the condemnation

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[4] In the 1288 or 1289 trial of a visionary named Rixende in Narbonne, for instance, two of her associates (clearly affiliated with a Franciscan convent) are identified as "biguina." Ignaz von Döllinger, *Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters*, vol. 2 (Munich, 1890), pp. 706–711. Döllinger is a problematic source, since it would appear that he did not consult the manuscript itself. However, a seventeenth-century inventory by Antoine Roque in the archive in Narbonne confirms the existence of the trial. See R.W. Emery, *Heresy and Inquisition in Narbonne* (New York, 1941), pp. 105, 130.

[5] The letter is most easily accessible in Paolo Vian's Italian translation, ed., Pietro di Giovanni Olivi: *Scritti scelti* (Rome, 1989), pp. 210–217, though the original Latin is available in F. Ehrle, "Petrus Johannis Olivi, sein Leben und seine Schriften," in *Archiv für Litteratur- und Kirchengeschichte des Mittelalters* 3 (1887), pp. 534–540.

[6] Though no manuscript of the Apocalypse commentary translation has survived, many sources attest to it. José Pou y Marti, *Visionarios, Beguinos y Fraticelos Catalanes (Siglos XIII–XV)*, revised edition (Madrid, 1991), pp. 483–512.

[7] David Burr's *The Spiritual Franciscans: From Protest to Persecution in the Century After Saint Francis* (University Park, PA, 2001) is now the indispensable reference on the Spiritual controversy, though Raoul Manselli, *Spirituali e beghini in Provenza* (Rome, 1959) is still very useful for the specific situation in Languedoc.

and execution of four Spiritual Franciscan friars in Marseille in May of 1318 for refusing to obey papal directives regarding the stockpiling of grain and wine in Franciscan convents, and for refusing to wear the more luxurious habits approved by the leaders of their order, many lay associates of these Franciscans took to the *maquis* and organized themselves into a resistance movement that succored the Spiritual Franciscan friars who were now fugitives from ecclesiastical justice. As early as October 1319, two such Beguins became victims of the inquisitorial process that had begun to target laypeople as well as the friars themselves, and died at the stake in Narbonne. Many others, probably over 100, followed these two to the stake.[8] The provincial council of Béziers in 1299 may have refrained from calling the Beguins "heretics," but under the papacy of Pope John XXII, Beguin became essentially another word for exactly that.

If we think of the Beguins exclusively as heretics, however, we are missing an important point. Though certain elements of their theology and especially their apocalyptic theology were avowedly not orthodox, the vast majority of the Beguins were not theologians. Their prayer and pious practices, I will argue, were more in line with their more orthodox contemporaries, and actually provide us with a significant window into the lives of the conventionally pious of the fourteenth century. As we examine the documents that reveal the ways in which they "talked about God," we are able to approach the pious lives of Franciscan laymen and women.

In this article, I will outline both the heresy and the orthodoxy of the Beguins of Languedoc. One form of evidence will be the testimony that they provided to the inquisitors of Languedoc, testimony that survives both in inquisitorial registers, and also in the manual of heretical depravity written by Bernard Gui. This material has become increasingly well known since the 1950s. But I will also examine two manuscripts of spiritual texts translated into the vernacular, both of Beguin origin, that will help to illumine exactly what it was the Beguins talked about when they were simply "talking about God."

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[8] For a fuller account of this controversy, see my forthcoming book, *So Great a Light, So Great a Smoke: The Beguin Heretics of Languedoc and their Resistance* (Cornell University Press). Chapters 10 and 11 of Burr, *Spiritual Franciscans*, are also invaluable (pp. 213–259), as is Manselli, *Spirituali*.

The Heresy of the Beguins: Poverty, Apocalypse and Persecution

First, however, we must speak about their heresy. It is not difficult to confirm that many of the ideas, opinions and practices of the Beguins were heretical by any ordinary standard of such things. One thinks, for example, of Robert Grosseteste's famous definition of heresy: "A heresy is an opinion chosen by human perception, contrary to holy Scripture, publicly avowed and obstinately defended." Though some scholars (most particularly Raoul Manselli) have argued that it was only their persecution that turned them heretical, that is simply not the case.[9] As we have already seen, as early as 1299, a year after Olivi's death, his followers were proclaiming the imminent advent of Antichrist—and Olivi's ideas of the identity of Antichrist were hardly orthodox. Olivi was willing to condemn very nearly the entire ecclesiastical hierarchy as Antichrist's minions, a position that certainly put him outside the fold.[10] His followers were little different. Olivi's opinions on evangelical poverty and on what he termed "poor use" were also deemed heretical within his own lifetime.

By the time the Beguins began to testify before the inquisitors of Languedoc, their opinions on these two subjects—the Apocalypse and evangelical poverty—were the main issues that separated them from the Church. When it came to evangelical poverty, the problem was quite simply one of disobedience: Olivi's followers, whether members of the Franciscan First or Third Order, refused to follow the papal lead on matters of poverty. Their great enemy, Pope John XXII, perhaps summed the situation up best in his short commentary on the Franciscan Rule contained in his inflammatory bull *Quorumdam exigit* (October 1317) when he wrote: "poverty is great, but chastity is greater, and the greatest of all is obedience if it is preserved intact."[11]

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[9] Manselli, *Spirituali*, pp. 40–41.

[10] See Warren Lewis, "Peter John Olivi, author of the *Lectura super Apocalipsim*: Was he Heretical?" in Alain Boureau and Sylvain Piron, eds., *Pierre de Jean Olivi (1248–1298): pensée scolastique, dissidence spirituelle et société* (Paris, 1999), pp. 135–156. Lewis answers his own question with an emphatic "Yes!" and goes on to declare that "our beloved Olivi was a 13th-century Moonie," revering Francis, a second Christ, in much the same way as the contemporary Rev. Sun Myung Moon's followers revere him.

[11] "Magna quidem paupertas: sed major integritas, bonum est obedientia maximum,

If we consider the Beguins' apocalyptic, it is important for us to remember that apocalyptic persecution is something of a self-fulfilling prophesy. For the Beguins, their persecution was not only a fact which strengthened the resolve of many, it also played directly into the apocalyptic scenario which, prompted by Olivi's Apocalypse commentary, they had come to expect. Persecution was not merely unjust, it was a necessary and expected sign that the better age was coming. The "apocalyptic eye" with which the Beguins viewed their own persecution strongly colored their perception of the events. As one scholar, Claudia Rattazzi Papka, has observed in a provocative phrase, this is the "Catch-22 of apocalyptic discourse in the Christian mode": the Beguins "projected their persecution into the realm of sacred history and thus made further resistance not only imperative, but also sanctifying."[12] Thus, each act of persecution, each Beguin burned at the stake was not merely an escalation in the war, but proof that their cause was just.

This apocalyptic certainty of the Beguins was surely one of the factors that led so many to seek martyrdom. Over one hundred Beguins died at the stake between 1319 and 1328, and many of them went unrepentant and joyful to their fate. Several depositions in the inquisitorial corpus mention a fifteen-year-old girl named Amegiardis who was burned in 1321 in Béziers; one eyewitness remembered that she had endured her martyrdom so patiently that

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si custodiatur illesa." The interpretation of this oft-quoted phrase has varied, primarily concerning the word "*integritas*." Malcolm Lambert interprets it as "unity," which would at first glance seem to make sense if we interpret it as the unity of the Order, or of the Church in *Franciscan Poverty* (Saint Bonaventure, 1998), p. 214; idem, *Medieval Heresy* (Oxford, 2002), p. 209. Lydia von Auw and Gordon Leff have chosen ambiguity: they translate it respectively as "intégrité" in *Angelo Clareno et les Spirituels italiens* (Rome, 1979), p. 144 and "integrity" in *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages: the Relation of Heterodoxy to Dissent c. 1250–c. 1450*, 2 vols. (Manchester, 1967; reprinted in one volume, 1999), p. 208. John Moorman, however, translates it as chastity, in *A History of the Franciscan Order From its Origins to the Year 1517* (Oxford, 1968), p. 311, as I do. The line following this one in the bull provides the key: "Nam prima rebus, secunda carni, tertia vero menti dominatur, et animo, quos velut effraenos et liberos ditioni alterius humili jugo propriae voluntatis astringit." If poverty is about things, and obedience is about the mind, then chastity is more obviously about the flesh than unity, or even integrity. John seems to be playing also with the idea of the vows of the Franciscan order: poverty, chastity, and obedience.

[12] Claudia Rattazzi Papka, "Fictions of Judgment: The Apocalyptic 'I' in the Fourteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1996), p. 133.

he definitely believed she was a saint ("*bien le croy de la sancte*").[13] Another burned Beguine named Astruga was referred to as "*Sancta Astruga et martir*,"[14] and one witness said that those who were burned in Lunel in 1321 had died "most beautifully" because they withstood the pain so silently and patiently.[15]

So convinced were the Beguins of the sanctity of their martyred friends and co-religionists that they began to collect relics among their burned remains. The most vivid story comes from the small town of Lunel, where seventeen Beguins, most of them from Lodève, were burned at the stake on October 18, 1321. In the weeks beforehand, a letter circulated secretly charging the Beguins to come to Lunel to see the "soldiers or martyrs fighting the good fight."[16] Several friends and family members traveled to Lunel to witness the event, and later told their stories to the bishop of Lodève.[17] The brother of one of the burned Beguins, Bernard Durban, recounted that the morning after he had seen his sister burned, he and some of his friends went back to the cemetery, and found it deserted, and several of the cadavers still largely intact. They entered the cemetery, and broke apart some of the bodies. In great fear lest they be caught, they took bones and flesh, put them in a bag, and continued to a hostelry in Montpellier, where they divided up the relics among themselves (and probably other Beguin sympathizers from Montpellier). Those who received these relics treasured them. One woman kept her bits of bone in a small bag, while one man placed his in the skin of a pomegranate and kept it carefully and another kissed the relic devoutly. Several of them said that they valued the relics so because they believed that those who had burned "were saved, and saints, and a day would come when it would be revealed that they were saints." In another case, the relics were believed to have a

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[13] Johan Vasconis, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Collection Doat 28, fol. 232.

[14] Manselli, *Spirituali*, p. 314.

[15] "Ipsi multum patienter substinuerant mortem et quod non clamaverant nec dixerant unum verbum, et quod pulcherrimum erat hoc videre." BnF Doat 27, fol. 81.

[16] The image is classically that of the martyr as holy athlete (as seen, for example, in the celebrated account of St. Perpetua), but probably also reflects the specific imagery used by Peter Olivi in a short treatise translated into the vernacular titled *Lo chevalier armat*, and found in one of the manuscripts described below.

[17] Their depositions were published by Manselli, *Spirituali*, Appendix III, pp. 309–319.

thaumaturgic effect.[18] They venerated these relics with a respect that would have been unremarkably orthodox, had it not been the case that the relics they had collected originated from the execution of unrepentant heretics.

A remarkable document recently discovered in some manuscripts of an inquisitorial trial of 1353 provides further evidence of how the Beguins venerated their burned brethren as saints. The names of 113 individuals appear in the pages of a small book (*libellum*) that two Italian Spiritual Franciscan friars were carrying when they were arrested in Montpellier, recorded along with the day of the year and the city in which they were martyred.[19] The text is clearly a martyrology, a way of remembering the holy dead who had died for

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[18] Galharda Fabre, the wife of a notary of Olargues, BnF Doat 28, fol. 126r.

[19] Three manuscripts of the *libellum* have come to light. Two manuscripts of the martyrology are in Wolfenbüttel and Prague: Herzog-August-Bibliothek Helmstedt 1006, fols. 12v–13v, and University of Prague IV. B. 15, fols. 304r–315r. I am grateful to Robert Lerner for having brought these manuscripts to my attention, and to Alexander Patschovsky for having generously provided me with his transcription of the relevant folios of the Wolfenbüttel manuscript. The text of the martyrology is included in the proceedings of the trial of two Spiritual *fraticelli*, Johannes Godulchi de Castiglione and Franciscus de Arquata (1354), both of whom were captured in Montpellier, and burned in Avignon. For the Wolfenbüttel manuscript see Otto Von Heinemann, *Kataloge der Herzog-August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, Die Helmstedter Handschriften 3* (Frankfurt am Main, 1965), pp. 3–5, and for the Prague manuscript, Joseph Truhlár, *Catalogus Codicum Manu Scriptorum Latinorum* (Prague, 1905), p. 249, no. 617. An edition of the Wolfenbüttel text is in my dissertation, *So Great a Light*, pp. 315–320. All line references are to this edition. Not all copies of the trial of the two *fraticelli* contain the text of the martyrology. See Patschovsky, "Strassburger Beginenverfolgungen im 14. Jahrhundert," *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 30 (1974), pp. 56–198, at 110, n. 136, Lerner, "New Evidence for the Condemnation of Meister Eckhart," *Speculum* 72 (1997), pp. 347–366, at p. 352, n. 15, and Josep Perarnau, "Documents de tema inquisitorial del bisbe de Barcelona, Fra Ferrer d'Abella (1334–1344)," *Revista Catalana de Teologia* 5 (1980), pp. 443–478, at p. 452, n. 29. A third manuscript contains a related but not identical text, Escorial N. I. 18. The text differs principally in so far as it is organized differently (by city, instead of by day or date), and is thus only a list of martyrs, and not precisely a martyrology used to commemorate the feast days of the martyrs. This text is in the hand of Nicolau Eimeric in a marginal note to an early copy of his *Directorium Inquisitorum*. An edition of the list of martyrs can be found in Jaume de Puig i Oliver, "Notes sobre el manuscript del *Directorium Inquisitorum* de Nicolau Eimeric conservat a la Biblioteca de l'Escorial (ms. N. I. 18)," *Arxiu* 19 (2000), pp. 538–539. It contains some variants in the names, and includes the deaths of Johannes Godulchi de Castiglione and Franciscus de Arquata. Thus the manuscript of the list of martyrs examined by Eimeric must have come from a different source than the Wolfenbüttel and Prague martyrologies, though all three appear to have been compiled from a common original.

the faith. The discovery of this manuscript confirms the existence of the martyrology mentioned by Bernard Gui in his inquisitorial manual. Bernard Gui reported that a certain Peire Domergue, imprisoned in Toulouse, had written a calendar listing those Beguins who had been burned, and that he recited their names as a litany.[20] A Beguin priest named Bernard Peirotas told the bishop of Lodève that he said a mass in honor of the burned Beguins using the common of the martyrs, and remembered them in his morning and evening prayers.[21] At this point, the lines between heresy and orthodoxy have begun to blur substantially. In his study of "the making of sainthood," Aviad Kleinberg points out that these are the very activities that change a private cult to a public one: "the singing of an office for a saint, and the solemnity of the prayers."[22] As he said mass in honor of the burned Beguins, secretly though it had to be because of the persecutions, Peirotas was expressing his conviction that they were true martyrs, and his hope that they would one day be acknowledged as such.

The Orthodoxy of the Beguins: The Manuscripts

If we turn away from the specifically heretical practices in which they engaged, and look more closely at their spiritual lives and pious practices, we blur the line even further. In 1337, nearly ten years after the last burning of a Beguin heretic in Languedoc, witnesses in the trial of rather odd monk from the monastery of St-Polycarpe near Limoux were asked if they could recognize a Beguin if they saw one. The testimony was quite consistent: they all agreed that Beguins go barefoot, wearing humble and long clothes, and walk

[20] *Bernard Gui, Manuel de l'Inquisiteur*, ed. and trans. G. Mollat, 2 vols. (Paris, 1926–27), vol. 1, pp. 134–135, Annette Palès-Gobilliard, ed., *Livre des Sentences de l'inquisiteur Bernard Gui*, 1308–1322 (Paris, 2002), vol. 2, pp. 1608–1609. This anecdote begins with a statement that Peire Domergue was pretending to be *alienatum a sensu* in constructing the litany, which James Given takes as an ineffective attempt at an insanity defense. See James Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society: Power, Discipline, and Resistance in Languedoc*. (Ithaca, 1997), p. 96. However, the recent discovery of the various manuscripts of the martyrology makes it clear that Peire's practice was common among the Beguins.

[21] Manselli, *Spirituali*, pp. 317–318.

[22] Aviad Kleinberg, "Proving Sanctity: Selection and Authentication of Saints in the Later Middle Ages," *Viator* 20 (1989), pp. 183–205, at p. 205, n. 3.

around all day with a mortified face. Beguins wore cloaks with hoods, of a coarse cloth, either black or brown.[23] As Bernard Gui observed in his *Manual*, Beguins could also be spotted in church by the way they prayed: "praying in church, they often sit hunched over, their faces turned toward one wall or another, or they are prostrate on the ground, hooded. Rarely are they seen kneeling with their hands together, like other men." He also pointed out that you could recognize Beguins by their salutations when they greeted one another: they would say "Blessed be Jesus Christ," or "Blessed be the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ." They also said a particular grace before and after meals. On their knees, one of them would say the *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, while the others listened before the meal, and afterwards, they would recite the *Salve Regina*, also kneeling.[24] While this appearance and these practices may seem piously excessive, there is nothing in them that is particularly heretical.

The weekly gatherings recommended for members of the Franciscan Third Order are another good example.[25] We know from several sources that the Beguins were accustomed to reading edifying texts aloud at these gatherings. Bernard Gui, for instance, reported that the Beguins would assemble together in their homes on Sundays and on feast days in order to read aloud (or listen to) such works "as the commandments, the articles of faith, legends of the saints, and the *Summa of Vices and Virtues*."[26] This short list of texts indicates the educational role that such gatherings played for the Beguins: they gathered together in order to educate one another spiritually. Some of the texts were clearly biblical, others were catechetical, and Laurent d'Orléans' *Summa of Vices and Virtues*, as one author has declared, was, in its "vivifying spirituality," "the book of reference for laymen

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[23] Though extensive parts of the trial of brother Raimon Amiel, preserved at the Vatican, were published by Célestin Douais in *La procédure inquisitoriale en Languedoc au quatorzième siècle d'après un procès inédit de l'année 1337* (Paris-Toulouse, 1900), he did not publish the whole. Details from the rest of the trial can be found in an informative article by Noël Coulet, "Un moine languedocien accusé de béguinisme," *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* 19 (1984), pp. 365–389.

[24] Bernard Gui, *Manuel* 1, pp. 118–119.

[25] See *Supra montem* in Eubel, *Bullarii Franciscani*, pp. 302–306.

[26] *Manuel* 1, pp. 110–115. The *Summa of Vices and Virtues* is a well-known work written by Laurent d'Orléans, a Dominican friar, confessor of Philip III, and translated into many medieval vernaculars, including Catalan. M. Roy Harris, *The Occitan Translations of John XII and XIII–XVII from a Fourteenth-Century Franciscan Codex (Assisi, Chiesa Nuova MS. 9)* (Philadelphia, 1985), pp. 16–18.

striving for perfection."[27] In testimony before the inquisitors, several Beguins confessed to reading aloud at these meetings: one Raimon d'Antusan of Cintegabelle had books in the vernacular (some by Olivi) that he read aloud to his fellows, and on the occasion of a celebratory meal commemorating the feast of Peter Olivi in 1325, a Beguin priest read aloud selections from Olivi's commentary on the Apocalypse.[28]

But while the various inquisitorial sources give us some tantalizing hints about what those mysterious Beguins of 1299—and the Beguins who came after—were actually doing when they got together in those weekly meetings to "talk about God," they do not fully quench our curiosity. We are fortunate, however, to have several manuscripts of Beguin origin containing Occitan translations of spiritual texts that shed further light on that question. Two of these manuscripts (Todi Biblioteca Comunale Ms. 128, and Assisi Chiesa Nuova Ms 9) are now located in Italy, where they were either brought by Beguins fleeing prosecution in Languedoc, or were compiled in Italy by such individuals or perhaps the literate friars who catered to their spiritual needs.[29]

The Todi manuscript is shorter, and thus easier to categorize. Only 66 parchment folios, it is written in a single hand entirely in Occitan. It is a tiny manuscript, only 11 cm. × 8 cm—virtually a medieval "*livre de poche*," or perhaps we might more appropriately call it a "*libellum*." The five texts it contains are all short exhortative treatises, designed to inspire the reader to greater depths of spiritual

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[27] *Dictionnaire des lettres françaises*: *Le Moyen Age*, nouvelle édition (Paris, 1992), p. 921.

[28] Pales-Gobilliard, *Livre des sentences*, vol. 2, pp. 1348–1349; A. Germain, "Une consultation inquisitoriale au XIVe siècle," *Publications de la Société Archéologique de Montpellier* 4 (1857), pp. 309–344 at pp. 335–336.

[29] The Todi manuscript was edited in its entirety by C. De Lollis, "Trattato provenzale di penitenza," in *Studi di Filologia romanza* V (1890), pp. 273–340; I have verified the transcription against the original. A more up-to-date description of the manuscript is in Paola Bianchi de Vecchi, *Testi ascetici in antico provenzale* (Perugia, 1984), pp. 23–27. The Assisi manuscript has been edited only in part (see below), but I have consulted it in manuscript. The Todi manuscript was edited in its entirety by C. De Lollis, "Trattato provenzale di penitenza," in *Studi di Filologia romanza* V (1890), 273–340; I have verified the transcription against the original. A more up-to-date description of the manuscript is in Paola Bianchi de Vecchi, *Testi ascetici in antico provenzale* (Perugia, 1984), 23–27. The Assissi manuscript has been edited only in part (see below), but I have consulted it in manuscript.

intensity. Two of the texts are translations of Latin texts by Peter Olivi, his "*Informatio ad virtutum opera*," and the well-known "Remedy against Temptations," which in its Latin version appears in some 31 fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts from Brussels to Bratislava.[30] The other three tracts are anonymous, and so far unidentified. The first treatise in the manuscript describes the eight degrees of true penitence,[31] the fourth treatise enumerates the five manners of fear and their fruits, and the final treatise is in praise of virginity. The composition of folios and quires in the manuscript, jumbled, confused and missing both the beginning of the first treatise and the ending of the last, makes it quite possible that the manuscript originally contained more texts.[32]

What kind of message do the texts in this manuscript seek to impart? Manselli, who edited four of Olivi's *opuscula* from a Latin manuscript (including these two), considered them to be examples (even in their Latin forms) of how a theologian like Olivi might have sought to address a "popular" audience. Theologians like Olivi "knew very well that the faithful did not believe, and could not believe in the same manner that they themselves did, and thus they strongly felt the need to reach their hearts, to lift up in them a religious spirit, to be their own true spiritual guide."[33] The "*Informatio*" is a fourteen-step program for spiritual self-improvement through the contemplation of the power and wisdom of God, the Passion of His Son, God's blessings, the nobility of virtue, the lives of the saints—and, of course, the seeker's failings, his temptations, the threat of the Last Judgment, the inevitability and nearness of death, and the pains of Hell. The *Remedia contra temptationes spirituales* warns the spiritual seeker to beware of tempting visions and revelations, and counsels him or her to seek out sage spiritual guides, and the confirmation of Scripture of any knowledge or insight received in such a manner.[34]

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[30] Antonio Ciceri, *Petri Iohannis Olivi Opera, Censimento dei manoscritti* (Grottaferrata, 1999), pp. 190–192.

[31] This text, along with the *Informatio* and the *Remedia* also appear in Assisi Chiesa Nuova 9 (see below).

[32] De Lollis did not describe this confusion adequately, but Bianchi de Vecchi does in *Testi ascetici*, pp. 24–25.

[33] Raoul Manselli, "Opuscules spirituels de Pierre Jean Olivi et la piété des béguins de langue d'oc," *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* 11 (1976), pp. 187–201 (my translation).

[34] Though the Occitan texts from the Todi manuscript have both been edited in Bianchi de Vecchi, *Testi ascetici*, the texts are more easily accessible in editions

The eight degrees of penitence lead the seeker through contrition, pain and tears, putting the body under the domination of the soul, chastity of body and soul, hatred of the world, devoted prayer, profound humility, and spiritual discretion finally to reach, as at the top of Jacob's ladder, perfect patience.[35]

Very little is known about the provenance of the Todi manuscript, though like the rest of the medieval manuscripts in the Todi Biblioteca Comunale, it almost certainly came from the library of the Franciscan convent of San Fortunato, home of the acclaimed vernacular Franciscan poet, Fra Jacopone.[36] Though San Fortunato had no particular reputation as a haven for Franciscan rigorists in the fourteenth century, a peculiar document in the city's archives relating to the Clarissan convent of Montesanto outside the city walls may shed some light on the manuscript's heretical history. In December 1329, cardinal Giovanni Orsini, papal legate, wrote a letter to the guardian of San Fortunato instructing him to absolve the sisters of Montesanto from the excommunication they had incurred by participating *in sacris* with partisans of Ludwig of Bavaria and Pietro de Corbaria, that is to say, with the faction of the Franciscans that after the clandestine departure of Michael of Cesena, minister general of the Order of Friars Minor, Bonagratia of Bergamo, William of Ockham and others from the papal court of Avignon in the spring of 1328, was considered to be in schism.[37] Michael of Cesena was no friend of Peter Olivi's partisans in the late 1310s (it was surely on his order that the four Spiritual friars were burned in Marseille in 1318), but the tumultuous General Chapter of Perugia in 1322, and the events that followed tended to confuse matters.[38] Though it is certainly useful

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and translations from the Latin. See Manselli, *Spirituali*, pp. 278–287, and Vian, *Scritti scelti*, pp. 156–165.

[35] This anonymous text is edited in Bianchi de Vecchi, *Testi ascetici*, pp. 131–141, and in De Lollis, "Trattato provenzale," pp. 277–285.

[36] The conjecture by De Lollis in "Trattato Provenzale," p. 274), repeated by Bianchi de Vecchi in *Testi ascetici*, p. 27, n. 10, is that it came from a 1287 bequest from Cardinal Bentivenga Bentivenga seems unlikely at best, given the presence of the *opuscula* of Peter Olivi.

[37] The original letter (dated December 22, 1329, from Narni) is in the Archivio Comunale of Todi, arm. IV, cas. III, no 71, and has been edited by Marino Bigaroni in *Montesanto di Todi: da monastero a rocca dell'Albornoz* (Assisi, 1981), pp. 146–147.

[38] Still the best description of the various factions is to be found in Decima Douie, *The Nature and Effect of the Heresy of the Fraticelli* (Manchester, 1932).

to make the distinction between *fraticelli de paupere vita* (most commonly known as the Spirituals), and *fraticelli de opinione* (sometimes called the Michaelists), after 1328, their interests (which converged on the question of Franciscan poverty), and no doubt their partisans, were frequently the same. The *fraticelli de opinione* whom the Poor Clares of Montesanto admitted into the enclosure of their monastery, to whom they gave succor and shelter, whose sermons they heard, and with whom they shared the sacraments, may also have been carrying suspect *libella* like Todi Biblioteca Comunale 128.

Our other manuscript, Assisi Chiesa Nuova 9 is both more extensive and more diverse in content. Chiesa Nuova 9 is another parchment *libellum* of some 138 folios, also entirely written in Occitan.[39] It was formerly in the collection of the Carceri, the hermitage outside Assisi that was something of a refuge for rigorist Franciscans after 1330.[40] Philologists who have studied the manuscript have surmised that though it was written in Occitan by one or more scribes and/or translators from western Languedoc, it may have been compiled by a scribe resident in Italy.[41] Most scholars are in agreement that the manuscript was probably compiled not long after 1335, given the *terminus a quo* of Francesco Bartholi's treatise on the indulgence of the Portiuncula, a version of which is contained in the manuscript.[42] Like the Todi manuscript, it seems to have been created

[39] The manuscript measures 14.2 cm. × 10 cm. See M. Bigaroni, "Catalogo dei manoscritti della Biblioteca storico-francescana di Chiesa Nuova di Assisi" in *Atti dell'Accademia Properziana del Subasio*, series 6, n. 1 (Assisi, 1978), pp. 9–43, at p. 17. A general study of the manuscript is found in F. Durieux, "Un manuscrit occitan des spirituels de Narbonne au début du XIVe siècle: essai d'interprétation franciscaine," *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* 10 (1975). A list of the various partial editions can be found at the end of this article.

[40] In addition to Marcella Gatti in *Le Carceri di San Francesco del Subasio* (Assisi, 1969), esp. pp. 95–103, see the 1341 will of Letitia, daughter of Ugolino Lete of Assisi, summarized in Cesare Cenci, *Documentazione di vita assisana, 1300–1530* (Grottaferrata, 1974), vol. I, p. 83, that clearly indicates the presence of *fraticelli* at the Carceri.

[41] The distinguished scholar of historical linguistics M. Roy Harris draws a likely zone of the manuscript author's origins that begins on the Ariège river near Saverdun, and extends south and east to Fanjeaux and Lagrasse, covering the extreme eastern part of the Ariège and the western zone of the Aude. Harris, *Occitan Translations*, esp. pp. 3–31 and pp. 68–71. The conjecture that the manuscript was copied in Italy was made by Ingrid Arthur, *Miracles*, pp. 7–9 on linguistic grounds. The point is contested by Paola Bianchi de Vecchi, *Testi ascetici*, p. 21, but on logical, rather than evidentiary, grounds.

[42] Though the final version of Bartholi's treatise dates from 1335, it is possible

as a collection of texts useful for a community of lay Franciscan tertiaries (i.e., Beguins). Whether it was created in Languedoc and then brought to Assisi by tertiaries who fled the inquisitors of their native land, or was created by those very same tertiaries (or their Franciscan friar helpmeets) in exile at the Carceri is impossible to determine given the scant evidence. Nonetheless, its presence among the manuscripts of the Carceri certainly confirms our impression that that sublimely desolate and isolated collection of caves (as it was in the beginning of the fourteenth century—none of the permanent structures there date from before the fifteenth century) was a haven for rigorists.[43]

Nearly all of the well-known texts that are translated in the manuscript have a particularly Franciscan flair: the Rules of the First and the Third Franciscan orders, Saint Francis's *Testament*, the *Sayings* of Brother Giles, Bonaventure's *Legenda Maior*, the *Admonitions* of Saint Francis, and Francesco Bartholi's treatise on the indulgence of the Portiuncula.[44] It is a small library of Franciscan "Greatest Hits," with a somewhat Spiritual cast. The most explicitly "Spiritual" is the confession of Mathieu de Bouzigues of 1299, which discusses the Olivian concept of "*paubre us*" at length. But these texts account for only nine or ten of the twenty-six different texts translated by the author of the manuscript. And it is these other texts, so similar to those in Todi 128, that are particularly interesting as we try to understand the spiritual lives of the Beguins of Languedoc.

Twelve of the texts are short spiritual treatises, designed to help the reader (or listener) be a better Christian. Many of them follow the model of Bonaventure's *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*: a numbered list of steps to follow on the path to a particular spiritual reward.[45]

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that the translation found in Chiesa Nuova 9, which is considerably truncated, may be based on an early version. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that it dates from very much prior to 1335, especially given that the paleographic evidence indicates a date closer to the middle of the fourteenth century than to the beginning. Bianchi de Vecchi, *Testi ascetici*, 16, Arthur, *Miracles*, pp. 3–5.

[43] For this period of the hermitage's history, see Gatti, *Le Carceri di San Francesco*, esp. pp. 95–103.

[44] A catalogue of the manuscript's contents can be found in Diego Zorzi, "Testi inediti francescani in lingua provenzale" *Miscellanea del Centro di Studi Medievali* 58 (Milan, 1956), pp. 250–259, though this is now best supplemented by Bianchi de Vecchi, *Testi ascetici*, pp. 13–27.

[45] See, for instance, the translation in the Classics of Western Spirituality series, *Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey into God, The Tree of Life, The Life of St. Francis*, ed. and

Five of these texts are certainly by Peter Olivi, and though none of the others are explicitly identified as his (and do not correspond to any known Latin compositions of Olivi), it is certainly possible that some, at least, of the others were also written by Olivi.[46] They may well have been sermons written for the faithful of Narbonne, perhaps composed directly in Occitan. None of them, however, are in the least "apocalyptic," or contain any reference to Olivi's well-known struggles over "poor use." With the exception of a closing prayer, the final texts of the manuscript are translations of the Gospel of John, chapters 12–17 (the chapters that immediately precede the Passion).[47]

What were the topics addressed in these short treatises, whether by Olivi or not? As in Todi, there are fourteen reasons why one's heart should die for love of God, twelve remedies against spiritual temptations, and eight graces that resulted from true penitence. There are also seven ways to please God, seven good inclinations, six subjects that everyone should think on before approaching the altar to receive communion, and "three causes in which we ought to concentrate and embrace all our desires."[48] Chiesa Nuova 9 continues with collations from the Desert Fathers, and a treatise attributed to Saint Bernard on how to meditate and to contemplate properly on the six hours of the Passion. As the introduction to this last text indicates, "St Bernard recommended this to devoted persons, those who wished to profit perfectly in their perfection of life."[49] Taken together, these short treatises, or perhaps sermons, are guides to a more perfect spiritual life for laypeople; if we consider the manuscript as a whole, a more perfect spiritual life for *Franciscan* laypeople.

The content of the manuscript helps us to determine the context in which it was used. The long collection of *exempla* on the subject

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trans. Ewert Cousins (New York, 1978), pp. 51–116; *Itin* (5.296a–313b). The trope is of course not limited to Bonaventure or the Franciscan context: the Rule of Saint Benedict famously contains twelve degrees of humility in chapter 7.

[46] Arthur considers it likely that the other texts are by Olivi, but the composition of the manuscript does not necessarily lend itself to that interpretation. Four texts by Olivi appear in a group, fols. 81r–89v, and then one appears at the end, fols. 137r–138v.

[47] It is possible that the manuscript once contained more quires. See Harris, *Occitan Translations*, p. 3.

[48] Fol. 87v. This is part of Peter Olivi's *Exercens*.

[49] Fol. 127v.

of death indicates quite plainly that it was meant to be *heard* by a mixed lay audience, and not simply read, as it contains scattered references to "*fraires e sors*" and to the "ears" with which they should listen to the text's message. This text is clearly exhortatory and didactic. It begins with a meditation on the nearness of death: "Our days are counted in the wisdom of God, and whether man has lived a day or a month or a year or 10 years or thirty years, so much less has he to live, and the closer he is to death."[50] The *exempla* that follow drum in the expected point that every Christian ought to be prepared for death at any moment.

Thus, the second half of Chiesa Nuova 9, like the whole of Todi 128, is a spiritual compendium with a small "s." This is not to say that the men and women who made use of the manuscript, or who heard read passages from it, were not heretical. They were. At those weekly meetings, they read aloud not only from these treatises designed to lead them to a more holy life, but also from Olivi's *Commentary on the Apocalypse*. One text in the Assisi manuscript that best speaks to this ambiguity is Peter Olivi's "The Soldier in Arms," or "*Lo cavalier armat*," a sermon addressed to those in the world, with knowledge of worldly things. Its imagery is entirely militant, and it exhorts the faithful to fight like a good knight amid the "traps and perils of these last times."[51] For Olivi, and for his followers, the last times were not merely the trope that had been evoked since evangelical times (as in Matthew 24), but were earnestly and urgently felt to be upon them. This text had two goals: it helped the Beguins to live more spiritually in their lives in the world—and also prepared them to interpret the cosmic significance of the persecuting events soon to interrupt their lives.

Two other manuscripts provide a possible foil to Chiesa Nuova 9 and Todi 128. The first, Volterra Biblioteca Guarnacciana 5230, is

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[50] Zorzi, "Testi inediti," p. 279.

[51] The Occitan of "Lo cavalier armat" has been edited by Ingrid Arthur, "Lo Cavalier armat, version provençal du Miles armatus attribué à Pierre de Jean Olivi," *Studia neophilologica* 31 (1959), pp. 43–64. This *opusculum*, along with three others by Olivi, however, is most easily accessible in its Latin form, edited from Guarnacciana 5230 of Volterra, in Manselli, *Spirituali*, pp. 287–290. Jean Duvernoy has translated it into French in Manselli, *Spirituels et béguins du Midi* (Toulouse, 1989), pp. 252–256. For a translation into Italian, and commentary (along with indications of editions and manuscripts), see Paolo Vian, *Scritti scelti*, pp. 166–169. See also Raoul Manselli, "Opuscules spirituels."

another small volume that contains several of the same *opuscula* by Olivi along with many other similar texts of a spiritual nature.[52] Its size and many of the elements of its composition would indicate that it served a similar purpose. But Guarnacciana 5230 is written in Latin, not in any vernacular, and there are further indications that it was a manuscript that was used primarily by friars or priests rather than laypeople. Along with the treatise by Saint Bernard meditating on the Passion that is also found in Chiesa Nuova 9, for instance, there is a text that provides advice for a priest preparing to *say* the mass. Additionally, the scribe has copied the text of Saint Bonaventure's advice to the Franciscan novitiate, which would seem to indicate an audience of the First Franciscan Order, rather than the Third.[53] The manuscript, far longer than either the Assisi or Todi manuscripts at nearly 300 folios, contains ten different known treatises by Olivi along with a variety of other texts, Franciscan and not Franciscan.

Finally, in a example that makes the line between heretical and orthodox seem particularly transparent, Capestrano Bibl. Conv. s. Giovanni 21 is a similar manuscript from the collection of Saint John of Capestrano, the prolific fifteenth-century Observant Franciscan reformer, preacher, and inquisitor. Like the manuscripts in Todi, Assisi and Volterra, Capestrano 21 is a small book, written in several hands, all of them nearly microscopically small. Moreover, given the composition of quires, the differing qualities of the parchment and organization of columns, and especially the obvious increased wear and tear visible on the outside of the pages of the central quires, it is probable that the central portion, which most clearly resembles the Todi and Assisi manuscripts, at one time circulated as a separate manuscript.[54] The contents of the central sixty-five folios

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[52] A description of the manuscript is in Manselli, *Spirituali e beghini*, pp. 267–274. In addition to the *opuscula* identified by Manselli, "De 12 gradibus humilitatis" is also by Olivi (See Ciceri, *Opera*, p. 186, p. 216). The provenance of the Volterra manuscript, which I have examined, is unclear. After the conventual suppression of 1784, virtually no documents remain pertaining to the Franciscan convent of Volterra, founded during the first half of the thirteenth century. See Cecilia Guelfi, "Piazza Inghirami," in Lelio Lagorio, ed., *Dizionario di Volterra*, vol. 3, *La città e il territorio: strade, piazze, palazzi, chiese, ville e opere d'arte del volterrano* (Pisa, 1997), pp. 427–437, esp. pp. 428–429.

[53] Bonaventure, *Reg nov* (8.475a–490b).

[54] I would like to thank Fabio Troncarelli for his confirmation of this hypothesis, based on an examination of the manuscript in August, 2005.

include nine Olivi *opuscula* as well as the short version of his *Questio de Perfectione Evangelica* 7, the *questio* that discusses how the friars ought to relate to women ("Whether a vow of avoiding suspicious association or conversation is implied in the evangelical counsel given on chastity") among other texts ranging from the scholastic to the spiritual.[55] There is even a short commentary on the *Salve regina* (fols. 160r–163r), that would surely have been of interest to individuals who repeated this antiphon after every meal (see above). While many of the contents of the manuscript are primarily practical guides to the pursuit of a more spiritual life, like Guarnacciana 5230, they also appear to be directed more to a clerical audience than a lay one: the presence of a scholastic text like a part of Bonaventure's commentary on the Sentences on the subject of the divine essence (fols. 145v–154v), a fragment from Aristotle on the nature of the soul (fols. 155r–157v) and a letter attributed to Saint Francis on the pursuit of the religious life (fols. 140r–143r) make this quite clear.

It is curious that a book of such controversial contents should end up in the personal collection of Saint John of Capestrano, one of the 65 well-thumbed manuscripts with him at his death after the siege of Belgrade, but ultimately unsurprising. Two of the few notes in the saint's hand in the manuscript are the titles added to two explicitly and obviously heretical pieces in the central and back

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[55] For the significance of this *questio* to the Beguins, see my forthcoming book, *So Great a Light, So Great a Smoke*, chapter 4. The nine opuscula are *De septem sentimentis Jesu Christi* (fols. 110r–114r), *De quattuordecim gradibus amoris gratiosi* (fols. 114–115r), *De conditionibus et proprietatibus amoris Dei* (fols. 115v–116r), *Exercens* (fols. 116r–117r), *Tria sunt nobis singulariter fugienda* (fol. 117r), *Brevis monitio ad amorem divinum obtinendum* (fol. 117r–v), *Visionis mystice narratio* (fols. 118r–120r), *Miles armatus* (fols. 120r–121v), *De septem temptationibus* (fols. 163–167r). Two anonymous poems are included in the manuscript, one that outlines the life of Christ in some 132 short verses all beginning with the name "Ihesus" (fol. 144r–v), and another that explores the seven deadly sins and corresponding cardinal virtues in fourteen stanzas of seven verses each (fols. 125v–126v). For a description of the manuscript, and the personal collection of St. John of Capestrano whence it comes, see Marco Bartoli, "Le opere di Pietro di Giovanni Olivi nella biblioteca di Giovanni da Capestrano" and Enrico Zimei, "Il codice XXI della biblioteca conventuale di Capestrano e l'appello monacense di Michele da Cesena (26 marzo 1330)" in *S. Giovanni da Capestrano: un bilancio storiografico. Atti del Convegno Storico Internazionale, Capestrano, 15–16 maggio 1998*, ed. Edith Pasztor (L'Aquila, 1999), pp. 47–80, and pp. 81–145. The old catalog by Chiappini provides an initial guide to the manuscript's contents, but does not distinguish the various *opuscula* or identify them as Olivi's. A. Chiappini, *Reliquie letterarie capestranesi: storie—codici—carte—documenti* (Aquila, 1927), pp. 71–73.

sections of the manuscript, which he has labeled "*Articoli fraticellorum della opinione*" (fol. 123v) and "*Libellus hereticorum de la opinione*" (fol. 176r), suitable commentary for the inquisitor, who in the pursuit of his duties may well have come by the volume or its contents.[56] And yet, John of Capestrano clearly did not keep this codex as a mere inquisitorial souvenir, containing the expression of heretical ideas. In his treatise *De bello spirituali* (unedited, but found in codices 4 and 5 of the same Capestrano collection), John makes silent but evident use of Olivi's *Miles armatus* in the formulation and elaboration of his theme.[57] John's intitulation of these texts makes it clear that he was aware of the suspect origin of his volume and its contents (moreover, "fr. Petrus Johannis" is indicated as the author of the *questio*), but his use of the texts indicates that he considered their ideas and advice sage and sound enough to repeat.[58]

It is clear from examining the contents of these manuscripts that they created, copied, carried with them and carefully preserved that the Beguins and Spiritual Franciscans of Languedoc who took refuge in Italy after the persecutions of the 1320s were concerned with far more than beliefs that we might characterize as heretical. As Paul Lachance has rightly noted in a review of David Burr's recent book on the Spiritual Franciscans, the ultimate object of all their striving was not poverty in and of itself, or the apocalyptic speculation for which they are best known, but "the profound meaning of the choice of poverty as an emancipation for a new way of experiencing God."[59]

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[56] Enrico Zimei (p. 83) notes the evident approval of the scribe for the arguments contained in the manuscript's final text, Michael of Cesena's *appellatio* from Munich from 1330, as evidence for the manuscript's heterodox origins. Though the details of his campaigns against the *fraticelli* are far from clear, John of Capestrano was given inquisitorial powers as early as 1418. See Zimei, p. 83, and Daniele Solvi, "Giovanni da Capestrano inquisitore e la dissidenza francescana," in *S. Giovanni da Capestrano: un bilancio storiografico*, pp. 25–46.

[57] Chiappini, pp. 28–30. Thanks are due to Dottoressa Elena Pallizzi, currently working on an edition of the *De bello spirituali* from these two manuscripts, for bringing this to my attention.

[58] Three other manuscripts in St. John of Capestrano's personal collection contain texts by Olivi, including six more of his *questiones de perfectione evangelica* and other Franciscan texts in codices 26 and 15, and a large fragment of the *Lectura super Apocalipsim* in codex 40. St. Bernardino of Siena was another fifteenth-century Observant reader of Peter Olivi, and copied several of Olivi's tracts in his own hand. See Bartoli, "Le opere di Pietro di Giovanni Olivi nella biblioteca di Giovanni da Capestrano" and the edition of four of Olivi's questiones from Bernardino's personal library by D. Pacetti, *Quaestiones quatuor de Domina* (Quaracchi, 1954).

[59] Paul Lachance, review of David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans* in *Church History* 71 (2002), pp. 882–884.

Poverty was not the ultimate goal, but only a tool for mystical understanding. This is perhaps best illustrated in a passage quoted in one of the *opuscula* contained in the Volterra and Capestrano manuscripts, Olivi's *De septem sentimentis Jesu Christi*.[60] Starting from a line taken from Saint Paul's letter to the Philippians, *Hoc enim sentite in vobis, quod et in Christo Iesu* ("For let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," Philippians 2:5), the treatise provides a practical path to participation in the inner life of Christ using Christ's own words on the cross. But first, Olivi evokes Pseudo-Dionysius, in declaring that the goal of all knowledge and every action is participation in the divine, and union with God.[61] Like the friars who created and smuggled all of these small volumes, the lay Franciscans who were the audience for the Todi and Assisi manuscripts were also seeking this same goal. With the texts that they heard and studied together, they progressed along a steady, measured path they believed would lead them to God.

Conclusion

We historians of heresy are frequently guilty of a single-mindedness little less presumptuous than that of medieval inquisitors: we are so eager to find the heretics and their heretical beliefs in the sources that we slight the true complexity of their religious and spiritual beliefs that are neither fully heretical nor fully orthodox. We argue such questions as whether or not "so and so was a heretic," forgetting that we are not inquisitors, and it is not our duty either to extract posthumous confessions, or to send anyone to the stake. It behoves us instead to study the beliefs and practices of such individuals in their ambiguity, for only then will we be able to capture them in anything close to their actual human complexity. The summary examination of the manuscripts described here is a first step towards that goal.

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[60] The text also features in Siena Bibl. Com. U.V. 5 fols. 11r–13r, one of the manuscripts copied by Bernardino. See Bartoli, "Le opere di Pietro di Giovanni Olivi," p. 51, n. 12.

[61] "Unde et ipse dicit libro Ecclesiasticae Jerarchiae [cap. I, 3; P.G. 3, 375] quod hic est finis ultimate Jerarchiae 'uniformis divina participatio et ipso unoque est inspectione quantum possible cibatio intellectualiter nutriens et deficans omnem ad ipsam extentum.'" Bartoli, "Le opere di Pietro di Giovanni Olivi," p. 57.

Published Editions of the Manuscripts

Todi, Biblioteca Comunale 128
Assisi, Chiesa Nuova 9

Arthur, Ingrid, *La vida del glorius sant Frances: version provençale de la Leganda Maior Sancti Francisci de saint Bonaventure* (Uppsala, 1955), "*Lo Cavalier armat*, version provençale du *Miles armatus* attribué à Pierre de jean Olivi," *Studia neophilologica* 31 (1959), 43–64 and *Miracles que Dieus ha mostratz per sant Frances apres la sua fi: version occitane de la Legenda Maior Sancti Francisci, Miracula de saitn Bonaventure* (Uppsala, 1992)

De Lollis, C., "Trattato provenzale di penitenza" in *Studi di Filologia romanza* V (1890), 273–340, complete edition.

P. Bianchi de Vecchi, *Testi ascetici in antico Provenzale* (Perugia, 1984). Editions of two texts by Olivi (the *Remedia* and the *Informatio*) based on the Todi and Assisi mss, as well as an unidentified text also in both manuscripts, "Aysso son .viii. grases de vera penitentia." Contains the most up-to-date description of both manuscripts, 13–27.

Assisi, Chiesa Nuova 9

Arthur, Ingrid, *La vida del glorios sant Frances: version provençale de la Legenda Maior Sancti Francisci de saint Bonaventure* (Uppsala, 1955), "*Lo Cavalier armat*, version provençale du *Miles armatus* attribué à Pierre de Jean Olivi," *Studia neophilologica* 31 (1959), 43–64 and *Miracles que Dieus ha mostratz per sant Frances apres la sua fi: version occitane de la Legenda Maior Sancti Francisci, Miracula de saint Bonaventure* (Uppsala, 1992).

Bianchi de Vecchi, Paola, "Un opuscolo inedito in lingua d'oc: *Ayssi son las collatios de XII. santz payres ermitas,*" *Miscellanea di studi romanzi offerta a Giuliano Gasca Queirazza* (Alessandria, 1988), vol. 1, 23–47 and *Testi ascetici in antico Provenzale* (Perugia, 1984), see above.

Delorme, F.M., "Frère Mathieu de Bouzigues, Confessio Fidei," *Études Franciscaines* 49 (1937).

Durieux, F., "La Règle des Frères Mineurs et le Testament de saint François d'Assise en langue d'oc du XIVe siècle," *Études Franciscaines*, nouvelle série 9 (1959), 204–227 and "Les Propos du frère Gilles d'Assise en occitan du XIVe siècle," *Annales de l'Institut d'Études Occitanes*, numéro spécial (1965), 58–87.

Harris, M. Roy, *The Occitan Translations of John XII and XIII–XVII from a Fourteenth-Century Franciscan Codex (Assisi, Chiesa Nuova MS. 9)* (Philadelphia, 1985).

Roqueta, J., "Las Admonicios de St. Francés, text occitan del segle XIV, trach del manuscrit de la Chiesa Nuova d'Assis," *Revue des langues romanes* 77 (1967), 85–123.

Zorzi, D., "Testi inediti francescani in lingua provenzale," *Miscellanea del Centro di Studi Medievali* 58 (Milan, 1956), 249–324. Zorzi published a partial edition of Olivi's *Exercens*, the confession of Mathieu de Bouzigues also published by Delorme, a collection of exempla concerning death, and Olivi's *De 12 gradibus humilitatis.*

Texts so far unidentified in Assisi Chiesa Nuova 9, and hitherto unedited

Fols. 89v–90r, "Humil poble deu Dieus a la fi apelar en aquest mon."

Fols. 93r–95v, "En .vi. cauzas deves pensar quant te aparelhas de cuminicar devotement."

Fols. 126r–127v, "Ayssi son las collatios de .xii. santz payres ermitas."

Fols. 127v–132v, "Aquesta es la maniera de pensar e de contemplar en las .vii. horas de la passio de Ihesu Christ, la qual adord[en]et Sant Bernat a personas devotas, las quals volon profitar en perfectio de vida perfieytament."

FRIAR ALONSO DE ESPINA, PRAYER, AND MEDIEVAL JEWISH, MUSLIM AND CHRISTIAN POLEMICAL LITERATURE

Steven J. McMichael

A radical change took place during the 1960s and 70s with regard to the Roman Catholic approach to Judaism and other religions. The document of the Second Vatican Council *Nostra Aetate* asked Roman Catholics to dialogue with Jews and members of other religions, which reversed an almost twenty-century tradition of monologue. Addressed especially to Jews, the document encourages Christians to seek mutual understanding and esteem with Jews. They are to do this in a number of ways: friendly talks, mutual study on scripture and theology, and formal dialogues. A controversial issue arose when the following suggestion for dialogue was proposed ten years later in a subsequent ecclesiastical document: "In whatever circumstances as shall prove possible and mutually acceptable, one might encourage a common meeting in the presence of God, in prayer and silent mediation, a highly efficacious way of finding that humility, that openness of heart and mind, necessary prerequisites for a deeper knowledge of oneself and of others."[1] This raises the question, which is still considered to be controversial: Is it theologically appropriate for a Christian to pray together with a Jew?[2] What is significant in this church statement is the assertion that prayer can lead to mutual understanding and respect which is the goal of interreligious dialogue. Not only that, but also the claim is made that understanding the prayer experience of Jews will help Christians understand their

[1] "Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration "Nostra Aetate" (n. 4), in *Stepping Stone to Further Jewish-Christian Relations: An Unabridged Collection of Christian Documents*, ed. Helga Croner (London/New York, 1977), p. 12.

[2] For example, Pope John Paul II was criticized for holding the World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi on October 28, 1986 by Archbishop Lefebvre and the Society of Saint Pius X.

own prayer tradition.[3] Could these same claims be made also about the Muslim prayer experience?

It would be anachronistic to expect to find this attitude of mutual understanding and respect based on the experience of prayer in the middle ages. Even though we have certain preachers and writers from the Christian side who appear to be more open to members of the other faiths (for example, Francis of Assisi and Juan de Segovia),[4] there appears to be no Christian in the middle ages who would believe that a Christian could pray with a Jew or Muslim, and that this prayer would bring about mutual understanding and respect and a greater knowledge of their own respective faith community.[5] As

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[3] On this positive approach for learning from another's prayer experience, see the comments of Cardinal Martini of Milan about this issue in a talk given at the Gregorian University in Rome on November 4th of 2004, found on the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning at Boston College's webpage at http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl.

[4] On Saint Francis of Assisi and his encounter with the Sultan of Egypt in 1219, see Kathleen A. Warren, *Francis of Assisi Encounters Sultan Malek al-Kamil* (Rochester, Minnesota, 2003). John of Segovia (1393–1458), a contemporary of Nicolas of Cusa (1401–1464) and Alonso de Espina, believed in what he called the "contraferentia" approach to Islam, which "is structured in three successive stages: first, the establishment and maintenance of peace with Muslim peoples; second, a deepening of cultural relations leading to neutralization of suspicion and antagonism and, finally, peaceful discussion of basic doctrines which separate the two ideologies." Quoted from James E. Biechler, "A New Face Toward Islam: Nicholas of Cusa and John of Segovia," in *Nicholas of Cusa in Search of God and Wisdom*, eds. Gerald Christianson and Thomas M. Izbicki (Leiden, 1991), p. 192. Even though Juan de Segovia believed that such dialogue would lead to the conversion of Muslims, in relation to what other writers were holding in regard to Islam in the middle ages, this was revolutionary. On Juan de Segovia, Alonso de Espina, and other fifteenth-century Christian writers on Islam, see Ana Echevarria, *The Fortress of Faith: The Attitude toward Muslims in Fifteenth Century Spain* (Leiden, 1999).

[5] Though there was no prayer together, there were laws in medieval canon law that both restricted and protected Jewish prayer spaces and times. In the eleventh chapter of Book III, "On Canon Law and the Jews" of the *Fortalitium Fidei*, Alonso asks the question: What are the Jews permitted according to church law? He answered, borrowing from existing canon law, that they were permitted to follow their own religious rituals and maintain their synagogues, but they were not to build new ones or make their synagogues larger or more extravagant. They were to be free from the threat of injury by Christians—in their persons, their synagogues and homes. They were not to be disturbed during their festivals or at their cemeteries, but they were not to associate with Christians on Sabbath. (But they were not to sell their wares to Christians.) Finally, they were not to be compelled to convert to Christianity. From the Muslim side, the so-called "Pact of Umar" (that originated about 637 by Umar I after the conquest of Christian Syria and Palestine) laid out the rules regarding Christian religious behavior in the lands of Muslims: they were not to build any new monastery, church, cell or hermitage; they were not to repair

we shall see, prayer had the opposite effect: it enclosed Christians, Jews and Muslims within their own respective religious communities and reinforced their belief that God was operative only within their respective religions. Medieval prayer, therefore, had an apologetic and polemical nature to it.

Many works of an apologetic/polemical nature that were written by Christians, Jews and Muslims begin with a prayer that not only asks for divine help against the enemy but also tell us a lot about the attitude of the author as he approaches his task and also the content of the work. These prayers act like the preface of the saints' lives where the author states why he is writing the text, to whom it is written for, and the unworthiness of the author in undertaking such a task. The prayer also reflects quite strongly the theology current in each respective religion. Prayer reinforces the writer's belief in his own religion while it also brings to mind the errors of the other. There appears to be no explicit evidence from the middle ages that there was an occasion in which prayer would bring a member of one faith community into a greater understanding and appreciation of a member of another faith community. For each of these religions, the act of prayer is the most intimate activity of human being because it is there that divine intimacy takes place. This is expressed by Bonaventure who quotes Francis of Assisi as saying: "What a person is before God, that the person is and nothing more."[6] Thus to know another is to know how, when and why one prays. This knowledge is certainly not what the medieval Jew, Christian or

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any of such buildings that may fall into ruins, or renew those that may be situated in the Muslim quarters of the town; they could not refuse the Muslims entry into their churches; Christian were not to harbor any spy in our churches or houses, or conceal any enemy of the Muslims; they were not teach their children the Qu'ran; they were not make a show of the Christian religion nor invite any one to embrace it; they were not to display the cross upon any churches or display crosses or sacred books in the streets of the Muslims, or in their market-places; they were to strike the clappers in their churches lightly; they were not to recite their services in a loud voice when a Muslim was present; they were not to carry Palm branches [on Palm Sunday] or Christian images in procession in the streets; that at the burial of the dead Christians were not to chant loudly or carry lighted candles in the streets of the Muslims and their market places. On these Islamic laws and practices as they were applied to Christians, see Richard Fletcher, *The Cross and the Crescent: Christianity and Islam from Muhammad to the Reformation* (New York, 2003), pp. 21–22.

[6] *LMj*, 6.1 *FAED* 2, p. 569; *Fontes*, 823.

Muslim was seeking in terms of approaching the prayer life of the "other" in their midst.[7]

This essay will present how the prologue to medieval Jewish, Muslim and Christian polemical works takes the form of a prayer in which the authors express their intention to not only give praise to God but also seek divine help in accomplishing the task at hand: defending their faith perspective and religious tradition while simultaneously attacking the errors of the other religion. A special focus will be on the prologue of the *Fortalitium Fidei* of the fifteenth-century Franciscan, Alonso de Espina (d.c. 1464), in which the author develops a long introduction to his text that appears in a prayer form. This essay will provide a translation (of the pertinent parts of his text), commentary and analysis of Alonso's prayer that constitutes his prologue. It shall also look at how Alonso presents the prayer life of Jews and Muslims and evaluates this knowledge in light of the medieval Christian polemical tradition. The essay argues that Alonso is representative of the overall Christian medieval polemical mindset that saw really no value in understanding how Jews and Muslims pray (and vice versa); he therefore did not have adequate knowledge by which to understand the most important and intimate act of the human being before God: their experience of prayer. Therefore what he criticized about the Jewish and Muslim prayer experience was his own preconceived notions about what that experience was about or was based on information he obtained from previous Christian polemical writers.

Medieval Apologetic and Polemical Literature

In the middle ages, the three principle monotheistic faith communities lived together in various places and interacted with each other

[7] Within the Franciscan prayer tradition, emphasis was placed on the interior aspect of prayer. Borrowing from Saint Augustine, the belief was that God is more intimate to ourselves than we are to our own selves. This is expressed most clearly in Book IV of the *Summa Alexandri* (a early thirteenth-century Franciscan theological treatise at one time attributed to Alexander of Hales) and the writings of Saint Bonaventure. On Alexander, see *De oratione, satisfactionis parte* in Vol. 4, *Alexandri Theologiae summa in quattour partes ab ipsomet authore distribute* (Cologne, 1622), p. 686b. On prayer in general in the writings of Bonaventure, see Timothy J. Johnson, *The Soul in Ascent: Bonaventure on Poverty, Prayer, and Union with God* (Quincy, 2000).

directly on various occasions. One of the ways that Jews, Christians and Muslims interacted with one another indirectly was through the page, that is, through the act of writing not only for their respective faith communities, but also against one another. In other words, they wrote a number of works that have an apologetic and polemical nature to them. "Apologetic" means that the work is intended for a defense of the faith or to be used internally in the faith community; "polemical" refers to works that were written to attack another religion or for external reference.[8] Many of these apologetic/polemical texts that are under our consideration in this article "were no doubt written in most cases with more than one purpose in view, and then as they circulated will have fulfilled a number of functions."[9] For example, Alonso de Espina gives the overall perception that his *Fortalitium Fidei* was written as a defense of Christianity (apologetic) that was under attack by Jews, Muslims, heretics and demons, but in actuality it is substantially an attack on these four groups of "enemies" of the Christian faith living in fifteenth-century Spain (polemic).[10] The main problem of the polemical mindset is that it "naturally forces those engaged in it to adopt hardened positions, to avoid statements of ambiguity (even where ambiguity might exist), and to characterize their opponents in the harshest black-and-white terms."[11] This is certainly the case with the polemical mindset of Alonso de Espina and other similar writers of the middle ages.

An apologetic/polemical text tradition, which can be seen as an independent literary genre, emerged in the medieval Jewish, Christian and Muslim faith communities. When we review the extant material available to us, we see that most of the texts are concerned with Jewish-Christian and Muslim-Christian relations, and only a few are devoted to Jewish-Muslim relations. Jews and Christians argued over the interpretation of the scripture and such theological issues as the messiahship and divinity of Jesus, the Trinity, and the continuing

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[8] On the difference and interrelatedness of "apologetic" and "polemic" see William Horbury, "Hebrew Apologetic and Polemical Literature" in *Hebrew Scholarship and the Medieval World*, ed. Nicholas de Lange (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 189–209.

[9] William Horbury, "Hebrew Apologetic and Polemical Literature," p. 189.

[10] To illustrate the title of Alonso's work, in the woodcuts that accompany the text, a friar, most likely Alonso, is shown in a tower surrounded by the four enemies.

[11] See Thomas E. Burman's *Reading the Qur'an in Latin Christendom*, 1140–1560, forthcoming from the University of Pennyslvania Press.

validity of the Mosaic Law. Christians and Muslims argued over such topics as the divinity and prophethood of Jesus, the character and mission of Muhammad, and the revelatory character of the New Testament and the Qur'an. There was a very limited exchange of polemical texts between Muslims and Jews, most likely because they could agree on the issue of monotheism and many issues in philosophy and theology. The extant polemical works are centered on such issues as the corrupt nature of the Hebrew Bible, the abrogation of the Jewish law, the Jewish refusal to acknowledge Muhammad's prophethood, the role of the earlier prophets (especially Moses), and the revelatory status of the Qur'an.[12]

Many medieval Jewish, Christian and Muslim writings in general, and not just apologetic/polemical writings, begin with an introductory prologue or introduction that states all or several of the following items: the purpose or goal of the work; what the problem is that the author will be addressing; who it is that commissioned the work; what type of argumentation will be used (scripture, rational, etc.); and humbly stated, the inadequacies of the author to undertake such a type.[13] The latter element is usually communicated through the instrument of a prayer where the authors speak of their own unworthiness for the task at hand and appeal for help from God—and sometimes from previous authors—to be able to reply to their intended audience.[14]

It is now our task to review how the prayers that are found in each of these faith traditions function in terms of their apologetic and polemical natures. We will look at what is common among them while simultaneously examining what the differences are in each tradition.

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[12] On the issue of Jewish-Muslim polemical literature, see the chapter entitled "Interreligious Polemics" in Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1994), pp. 139–161.

[13] On prologues as a literary genre in the Middle Ages, see *Les prologues médiévaux*: Actes du colloque international organisé par l'Academia Belgica et l'École française de Rome, avec le concours de la FIDEM, Rome, 26–28 mars 1998 (Textes et études du Moyen Age, 15), ed. Jacqueline Hamesse (Turnhout, 2000).

[14] This goes to back at least Christian antiquity. For example, see Sidney H. Griffith, *The Beginnings of Christian Theology in Arabic: Muslim-Christian Encounters in the Early Islamic Period* (Burlington, 2002), p. 119.

Jewish Prayer in a Polemical Context

Jewish prayer of the middle ages was centered on the life of the synagogue. Besides the recitation of the *Shema*, Jewish synagogue prayer revolved around the reciting of psalms and other scriptural texts three fixed time periods during the day, the reciting of the benedictions (*berakhot*), the *Amida* (the "Standing Prayer"), the supplications or petitionary prayer, meditation, and the reading of the Torah and prophets. It is in the context of communal prayer that private prayer found its place for the average medieval Jewish person.[15]

In Jewish literature of the middle ages it was quite common to find the author begin his theological treatise with a prayer that indicates that the treatise was flowing out of his entire life of public and private prayer. For example, the thirteenth-century author Nachmanides begins his *The Book of Redemption* with a "a statement of a man who speaks after giving praise to G-d; who from the stirring of thought and oral petition, renders thanksgiving to Him with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and with all the might [he can gather]."[16] He then states that "we are obligated to make the loins strong, to fortify the power mightily, so that I should know how to sustain with words those that are weary of the exile, and bring them the message of the redemption."[17] This is a recognition that in the context of Jewish exile, it is God who is there sustaining the faithful remnant with the message of deliverance. The heart of Nachmanides' prayer therefore is the hope that faithful and thankful prayer will lead to Jewish emancipation.

Joseph ben Shem Tov's (c. 1400–c. 1460) introduction to Hasdai Crascas' *The Refutation of the Christian Principles* likewise begins with a reference to his written reflection flowing out of his prayer: "Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies; for it is ever with

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[15] For a description and illustrations of Jews at prayer in the middle ages, see Raymond P. Scheindlin, "Communal Prayer and Liturgical Poetry" in *Judaism in Practice: From the Middle Ages through the Early Modern Period*, ed. Lawrence Fine (Princeton, 2001), pp. 39–51; Therese Metzger and Mendel Metzger, *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages: Illuminated Hebrew Manuscripts of the Thirteenth to the Sixteenth Centuries* (Fribourg, 1982), especially pp. 237–238; and Lawrence A. Hoffman, *The Canonization of the Synagogue Service* (Notre Dame, 1979).

[16] Ramban (Nachmonides), *The Book of Redemption*, trans. Charles B. Chavel (New York, 1978), p. 6.

[17] Ramban (Nachmonides), *The Book of Redemption*, p. 6.

me" [I shall begin] after praise and glory to the infinite God who, from His essence, has apportioned for us that equity and felicity through which we can become perfect and happy."[18] His own life of prayer is looked upon as the foundation from which he was able to write this preface or introduction to Crascas' polemical treatise.

The life of prayer, therefore, is the foundation of the attempt to remain faithful to the religious truth that these Jewish writers have embraced. In fidelity to Judaism, certain Jewish authors of the middle ages wrote treatises to defend their own Jewish belief (apologetic dimension) while also trying to show the errors of their Christian neighbors (polemical dimension). Many medieval Jewish authors, therefore, begin their apologetic and polemical works with a prologue that is in the form of a prayer. For example, Saadia Gaon begins his *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions* with the following prayer:

> Blessed be God, the God of Israel, Who is alone deserving of being regarded as the Evident Truth, Who verifies with certainty unto rational beings the existence of their souls, by means of which they assess accurately what they perceive with their senses and apprehend correctly the objects of their knowledge. Uncertainties are thereby removed from them and doubts disappear, so that demonstrations become lucid for them and proofs become clear. May He be lauded, then, above the highest commendation and praise.[19]

The prayer in the context of the prologue functions in the same way as medieval Muslim prayer does, as we shall see, in that it praises God and also asks for divine help in order to write the book that refutes the errors of the Christians to whom he is writing against. What is striking in this prayer is the combination of reason and faith that leads to a harmonious act of praise of the Creator.[20]

The aforementioned prayer by Joseph ben Shem Tov—in his introduction to Hasdai Crascas' *The Refutation of the Christian Principles*—is followed by a clear statement of what prayer is intended to do: defend the Jewish faith and also show the errors of Christians. Joseph states:

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[18] *The Refutation of the Christian Principles by Hasdai Crascas*, trans. Daniel J. Lasker (Albany, 1992), p. 19.

[19] Saadia Gaon, *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions*, trans. Samuel Rosenblatt (New Haven, 1948 (rev. ed. 1976)), p. 3.

[20] On the use of reason in Jewish-Christian polemical literature, see Daniel J. Lasker, *Jewish Philosophical Polemics Against Christianity in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1977).

> He [God] has guarded us from perplexity and confusion and has taken us from among the nations to be a people of His own possession, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, servants of the Most High. [We are] those who reflect the truth, expert in war, and separated from blunders, for God has separated us from those who go astray in order to bask in the emanation of His Glory. He has not designed our destiny to be like theirs, nor our lot like that of all their multitude. All of them act shamefully and disgracefully because of their doctrines and beliefs. They are like an animal in the shape of a man, separated from the sensible, isolated from the intelligible. The father teaches lies and deceptions to the children. They bow down to vanity and emptiness and pray to a god that cannot save. But we, his people, the sheep of his pasture, bow before the King, the Lord above all nations, mighty to save. He shined upon them the Torah of truth from the place he made His abode. His throne is in the heights of the world—a divine throne—and the justice of his righteousness reaches to the end of the earth. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and power. You are blessed and exalted above all blessing and praise.[21]

Here, the polemical address to those "who go astray" is framed by the prayer that both begins and concludes this opening paragraph of his introduction. Prayer, therefore, draws the author into the polemical agenda of the treatise and gives the author the strength and courage to point out the errors of those whom he is attacking. It also strengthens him within the faith life of Judaism that is founded on the doctrine of monotheism and adherence to the Torah.

Hasdai Crascas's (c. 1340–c. 1410/11) treatise *The Refutation of the Christian Principles* also begins with a prologue that functions as a prayer. Prayer acts as the frame and foundation for the main content of the treatise, in this case the refutation of Christian exegetical/theological principles. He states that he has been asked to compose this treatise by princes and nobles in order to establish the truth against Christians and sees this effort as a way to give praise to the Creator.[22] Prayer is therefore the foundation of this treatise and

[21] *The Refutation of the Christian Principles*, p. 19.

[22] Hasdai Crascas's prayer reads: "Princes and nobles pleaded with me to compose a treatise in which I would present the doubts and refutations which the followers of the Torah of Moses, peace be upon him, can offer against Christian belief; and that, by evaluating the positions of each side, I should intend by means [of composing this treatise] the worship of the Creator, may He be blessed, by establishing the truth in the ancient dispute between the Christians and the Hebrews. Since this goal is worthwhile in and of itself, and since I had to fulfill their desire

furthermore the treatise itself is looked upon as a written prayer. Also in his opening paragraph we see two common elements of many medieval prologues: the acknowledgement that he was asked to write this treatise and the humble admittance that he was unworthy to write the treatise.

The prayer for divine help sometimes comes at both the beginning and the end of Jewish polemical works. For example, the Joseph Kimchi (1105?–1170?) begins his *The Book of the Covenant* with passages of scripture that act as a set of prayers.[23] Kimchi then begins his attack against the false teachings of the Christians in regard to their Christological interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures—the main body of the treatise. In his final argument, which is a rebuttal to the Christian claim that Elijah's offering sacrifice [*The Lord's fire came down and consumed the holocaust, wood, stones, and dust, and it lapped up the water in the trench*—1 Kings 18:38] should be interpreted Christologically, Kimchi claims that God "wanted to allude [to the fact] that the fire of our holy religion [Judaism] would consume the water which is the baptismal water of Christianity."[24] Kimchi concludes his polemical text with the following prayer: "May the God who answered him with fire sustain the fire of our holy religion. May He quickly send one who will announce to us the coming of the redeemer to gather the dispersed of Israel. Amen. Selah. May it be [His] will and let us say Amen."[25] Here the argumentation against Christianity flows right into the heart of Kimchi's concluding prayer.

Another polemical treatise, *The Wars of the Lord* by Levi ben Gershon (Gersonides), begins his treatise with an invocation by which "Gersonides takes fragments from various verses and weaves them into a 'psalm' of his own invention. Since these phrases have been taken

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(and even though I am unworthy), I saw fit in this treatise to prepare and carefully compose that which they commanded me." Quoted from *The Refutation of the Christian Principles*, p. 23.

[23] "Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart: 'Be strong, fear not.' Your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you (Isaiah 35:3f.). But you, take courage, and do not let our hands be weak, for your work will be rewarded. (2 Chronicles 15:7). Be strong and let your heart take courage, all you that wait for the Lord. (Psalm 31:25). The spirit of the Lord speaks through me; His word is upon my tongue. (2 Samuel 23:2)." Quoted from Joseph Kimchi, *The Book of the Covenant*, trans. Frank Talmage (Toronto, 1972), p. 27.

[24] *The Book of the Covenant*, p. 80.

[25] *The Book of the Covenant*, pp. 80–81.

out of their original places, their meanings have changed and are determined by their new contexts."[26] This appears to be the way Jewish authors assembled the prayers that began their polemical treatises. Therefore Gersonides is not unusual in beginning the main body of his treatise with a mention of prayer that will lead into his main purpose of his writing: "Having given our praise and thanks to God and having asked Him to direct us in His way, I would like to examine in this book several important yet difficult questions on which many crucial doctrines relevant to man's intellectual happiness are based."[27] The defense of the faith, which is the main purpose of the treatise, is given its spiritual foundation by prayer.

The prologue of many Jewish apologetic and polemical texts, therefore, has a number of common characteristics. The prologue functions as a prayer that lays the spiritual foundation for what the main body of the text is going to be about. In many of these texts, psalms form the basis for the prayer. The prologue, since it functions as a prayer, is above all a way for the author to give praise to God. Prayer also gives the author the necessary strength and courage to write the treatise that defends Judaism and also points out the errors of "those who go astray." Certain of these Jewish authors, like Hasdai Crescas, also provide us with a literal description of the historical/social context in which the author felt compelled to write the treatise. But they are not overly concerned about this, since their treatise is written with a universal and everlasting intention in mind; in other words, the text that they write will be able to be used by Jews everywhere and for all times since they know that Jews are struggling with these same issues throughout the known world and also that they will be dealing with these same issues until the coming of the Messiah.

What these authors are proclaiming and protecting are the essentials of medieval Jewish theology. These essentials are, for example, expressed in the thirteen principles of faith of Moses Maimonides that stress the existence, perfection, unity, noncorporality, and eternity of God.[28] The Jewish polemical writers, along with Maimonides,

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[26] *The Wars of the Lord: Book One: Immortality of the Soul by Levi ben Gershom (Gersonides)*, Volume One, trans. Seymour Feldman (Philadelphia, 1984), p. 87.

[27] *The Wars of the Lord*, p. 109.

[28] On the Thirteen Articles of Jewish faith, see George Robinson, *Essential Judaism: A Complete Guide to Beliefs, Customs, and Rituals* (New York, 2000), p. 416. On Maimonides

wrote to uphold the immutability of the Torah along with recognition of Moses as prophet above all other prophets/teachers and the belief in the Messiah who is to come. What these polemical texts attack are such issues as the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the divinity and messiahship of Jesus, and the virgin birth of Jesus. In attacking these doctrines, the Jewish writers were defending their belief in the oneness of God and the sole authority of the Torah as the book of revelation and Jewish law. The New Testament and Christian doctrine in general were seen as threats that would destroy what basic medieval Judaism was trying to maintain and protect.

Muslim Prayer in a Polemical Context

The foundation of Muslim prayer in the middle ages was the practice of *salat*—the five obligatory times of prayers during the day. Beyond *salat*, there was much variation in devotional and mystical prayer among Muslims at the time. The literature on Muslim prayer is vast as evidenced by the many manuals and texts that were written during this time period.[29] There are basically four different types of prayer in Islamic spirituality: ritual prayer (*salat*), petitionary prayer (*da'a*), the remembrance of God (*dhikr*), and mystical prayer (*munajat*).[30]

Since prayer was the primary means of encountering God, it is no surprise to find that in Muslim writings of the middle ages, it was very common for the writers to begin their books with a preface in which a prayer to or praise of Allah sets the stage for discussing the main contents of the book. For example, the preface to *The Revival of Religious Learning* by Imam Ghazali begins in this way:

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view of Christianity, see David Novak, *Jewish-Christian Dialogue: A Jewish Justification* (New York, 1989), pp. 57–72.

[29] Paulist Press has published a number of these works in their Classics of Western Spirituality series.

[30] Michael Sells in his introduction to *Early Islamic Mysticism: Sufi, Qur'an, Mi'raj, Poetic and Theological Writings* (New York/Mahwah, 1996), p. 13, lists them as (1) ritual prayer (*salat*); (2) personal entreaties and petitions to the deity (*da'a*); (3) meditative remembrance (*dhikr*), in which certain key Qur'anic phrases or divine epiphats are continually invoked, aloud or silently; and (4) *munajat*, devotional conversation between the lover and the divine beloved.

> "Take what the Apostle gave you and keep away from whatever he forbade you." (Qur'an 59:7) Firstly, I begin with the praise of God though our praise is quite insignificant and meager in relation to His real glory. Secondly, I invoke His blessings on all the prophets and especially on His last and greatest Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon them all). Thirdly, I pray for his help and grace that there should remain in me firm will and incentive for writing the book *Ihyao Ulumiddin* or the Revival of religious sciences.[31]

The preface in this case simply shows the reverence the author has for Allah, acknowledges the prophetic heritage that leads from Adam up to Muhammad, and asks for divine inspiration and help to write the work. This would follow the basic pattern of Muslim spiritual writings in general. For example, this pattern is found in the preface to Nawawi's thirteenth-century *Manual of Islam*.[32] The common characteristics of these prologues or prefaces are: praise of Allah and a recognition of Allah's principle qualities or attributes which are among others compassion and mercy; a calling upon the blessing of Muhammad and the prophets; a reference to the living Muslim community which embodies the message of God's revelation as revealed in the Qur'an; and the request for Allah's help in writing the treatise.

In many Muslim polemical treatises, the prayer or salutation to Allah merges with the polemical theme that will be addressed in the book, as is evidenced by the early fourteenth-century text, Ibn Taymiyya's (*The Correct Answer to Those who Changed the Religion of Christ*):

> There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God. Praise to God, the Lord of the universe, the merciful, the compassionate, the Master of the Day of Judgment. Praise to God who created the heavens and the earth and made the darkness light. Those who disbelieve in their Lord wander astray. Praise to God who did

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[31] *Imam Gazzali's The Revival of Religious Sciences*, trans. Al-Haj Maulana Fazal-ul-Karim (Lahore, 1971), p. 8. On Ghazali's treatment of prayer, see Kojiro Nakamura, *Ghazali and Prayer* (Kuala Lumpur, 2001).

[32] The text reads: "In the name of Allah, Most Merciful and Compassionate. Praise to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. The final outcome is to the pious, with enmity toward none save wrongdoers. And blessings and peace upon our liegelord Muhammad, the seal of the prophets and exemplar of the godfearing, and upon his folk and Companions one and all, those who followed after them, and all the righteous. To commence, the following are beneficial objectives and resplendent lights: I ask Allah to make the work purely for His sake and to reward me for it out of His generosity. He is the protector of whoever seeks refuge in Him and takes by the hand whoever relies on Him. I have arranged them in seven sections." Quoted from *Al-Maqasid: Nawawi's Manual of Islam*, trans. Nuh Ha Mim Keller (Beltsville, 1994), p. 3.

> not take a son, who has no partner in governance, nor has any associate from lower creation who He had exalted in greatness. Praise to God who sent down upon His servant the Book, and did not permit any deviation in it, but established it in order to warn of a severe chastisement from Him, to make the believers who do good works rejoice so that for them there would be a fine reward, and to warn against those who say that God has taken a son. They have no knowledge of that, nor did their forefathers, dreadful is the word that goes forth from their tongues. In any case, what they speak is but a lie (Qur'an 18:1–5). As for what follows (*amma ba'd*): God—may He be blessed and exalted—made Muhammad the Seal of the prophets, and perfected His religion for him and for his community. . . .[33]

The first verse of this prayer states the *shahada* (the Muslim faith statement) and then clearly follows the pattern of Surah 1—the *Al-Fatiha* or "The Opening"—of the Qur'an by stating that God is most compassionate and God is the Lord of creation.[34] As Surah 1 concludes: "Guide us on the straight way, the way of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings, not of those who have been condemned [by Thee], nor of those who are astray."[35] This prayer of Ibn Taymiyya follows the surah pattern by mentioning the unbelievers "who go astray." What is left out here are "those who have been condemned by Thee" or "those who have incurred your wrath" which in medieval Muslim Qur'anic interpretion would have understood to refer to the Jews.[36] Those who go astray are interpreted in the Islamic tradition (e.g., Al-Ghazali) as the people "whom the truth

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[33] The Arabic title is *Al-Jawab Al-Sahih li-Man Baddal Din al-Masih*. Quoted from *A Muslim Theologian's Response to Christianity: Ibn Taymiyya's Al-Jawab Al-Sahih*, ed. and trans. Thomas F. Michel (Delmar, 1984), p. 137.

[34] "All praise is due to God alone, the Sustainer of all the worlds, the Most Gracious, the Dispenser of Grace, Lord of the Day of Judgment. Thee alone to we worship; and unto Thee alone de we turn for aid. Guide us on the straight way, the way of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings, not of those who have been condemned [by Thee], nor of those who are astray. (Q. 1:1–7) Quoted from *The Message of the Qur'an*, trans. Muhammad Asad (Gibraltar, 1980), pp. 1–2. A Muslim will pray Surah 1 around forty times a day, and therefore this sura has a tremendous amount of importance in the Muslim approach to prayer.

[35] *The Message of the Qur'an*, p. 2.

[36] According to the Muslim commentator Al-Tabarī (b. 839), "those who have incurred God's wrath" refer to the Jews and "those who go astray" refer to the Christians. Tabarī will argue that Jews and Christians have both attributes. On this issue, see Al-Tabarī's *The Commentary on the Qur'an*, vol. 1, eds. W.F. Madelung and A. Jones (Oxford, 1987 reprint 1989), pp. 76–77. I want to thank Thomas Burman for pointing this fact out to me.

has either not reached at all, or to whom it has come in so garbled and corrupted a form as to make it difficult for them to recognize it as the truth."[37] The text was understood by Muslim commentators of the Qur'an to be addressed to Christians who have difficulty in recognizing the truth of Islam because they have been corrupted by the Christian scriptures and the Christian theological tradition. The third section—the heart of the prayer—then gets to the main purpose of why the author is writing this book: the refutation of anyone who claims that God has a partner or begets a son. Though he does not state it explicitly here, this is intended to be a polemical attack on the belief in the incarnation of Jesus Christ and the Christian claim that he is God's son. The author is also defending the Muslim belief in the sacredness of the Qur'an, the role of Muhammad as God's final prophet, and the righteousness of the Muslim acceptance of both the Qur'an and Muhammad.

The main elements of Islamic prayer in a polemical context come to the fore in Ibn Taymiyya's text. The prayer always begins with praise to Allah; Muhammad's role in revelation is highlighted; the contrast between the true faith (Islam) and those who have gone astray (Christians) is made apparent; and the prayer itself then leads the author to write the text as both an apologetic and polemical enterprise.

These prayers we have reviewed reveal the essential features of Islamic theology: the absolute unity and oneness of God that will not allow any divine-human ontological exchange, as in the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation; the absolute will of Allah in relation to creation and creatures; and the role of Muhammad as the final prophet who has communicated the final and complete revelation to humankind. As we have seen in Jewish polemical literature, these Muslim authors were not concerned with the historical and social context in which they live; rather, they desired to provide a defense of the Islamic faith that would be useful for not only Muslims who are living at the time of the author, but also all Muslims for all times. The text, therefore, has a universal and everlasting quality to it that will be useful for Muslims now and until the time of the final days that lead to the Last Judgment.

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[37] *The Message of the Qur'an*, p. 2, footnote 4.

Medieval Christian Writers on Prayer

Christian prayer among the medieval theologians and friars revolved around the liturgy, the divine office and private prayer (which sometimes lead to contemplative and mystical prayer). Medieval Christian spiritual and theological writings frequently begin with a preface or prologue that begins with a prayer. The thirteenth-century Franciscan Bonaventure (d. 1274), for example, begins his treatise on spiritual journey to God, the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, with a prayer that calls upon God who as the Father of Lights illuminates human beings and is the source of "every good and every perfect gift."[38] Through the intercession of Jesus, Mary and Francis, Bonaventure prays that God "may enlighten the eyes of our souls to guide our feet into the way of that peace which surpasses all understanding."[39] Bonaventure goes on to speak of his own experience of being drawn into quiet and contemplation on Mount La Verna where he reflects on Francis' seraphic vision which culminated in the stigmata experience. Prayer, therefore, is the context in which Bonaventure wrote an entire treatise on the ways in which God leads the person of prayer step by step into union with God, which is the final goal of all prayer.

Not all Christian polemical texts begin with a prayer.[40] In fact, many of the texts found in the *Contra Iudeos* literature do not have a prologue at all—they simply begin immediately with their attack on the Jews. For example, Augustinian Bernardo Oliver (d. 1348) begins his text, not with a prologue, but simply with a statement about the blindness of the Jews based on the passage from Zephaniah 1:17, *They shall walk like the blind, because they have sinned against the Lord.*[41] Some of the prefaces that we find in this type of polemical

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[38] *Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey into God, The Tree of Life, The Life of St. Francis*, prol. 1, ed. and trans. Ewert Cousins (New York, 1978), p. 53; *Itin* (5.295a).

[39] *The Soul's Journey into God*, p. 53; *Itin* (5.295a).

[40] On medieval Christian polemical literature, see Gilbert Dahan, *The Christian Polemic against the Jews in the Middle Ages*, trans. Jody Gladding (Notre Dame, 1991) and his more expansive work *Les intellectuels chrétiens et les juifs au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1990).

[41] Bernardo Oliver, *El Tratado "Contra Caecitatem Iudeorum" de Fray Bernardo Oliver*, ed. Francisco Cantera Burgos (Madrid-Barcelona, 1965), p. 67. Writers such as Isidore of Seville, Gilbert Crispin and Fulbert of Chartres have no prologues that begin their polemical texts against the Jews. Alonso begins his Book III, against the Jews, with this passage and commentary that he borrows from Bernardo Oliver.

literature appear, not in the form of a prayer, but rather in the form of a letter addressed to the intended recipient. For example, in the late twelfth century, Peter of Blois begins his treatise *Against the Perfidity of the Jews* (c. 1198) with a prologue that is in the form of a letter that is addressed to John Bishop of Worcester.[42] We also have examples from the middle ages that the prologue describes the actual situation of the encounter from which the text will extrapolate. The prologue to Gilbert Crispin's twelfth-century disputation, also in letter form, is remarkable in that there is an amicable relationship between the Christian and a Jew.[43] This stands out as one of the few texts from the middle ages that takes a positive tone to the Jewish-Christian encounter. One other disputation of the early middle ages has the same positive tone: Peter of Cornwall's *Disputation against Simon the Jew* written around 1208.[44]

As we have seen with Jewish and Muslim works, an examination of Christian polemical writings reveals that the prayer that begins a polemical text flows out of the communal and private prayer life of these authors. Christian polemical writers in the middle ages began their works with a prayer that functioned as a way to praise God and draw divine strength for the task at hand: defending Christian truth and combating the enemies of Christianity in their midst. For example, the preface to *Capistrum Judaeorum* (1267) of the Dominican friar Ramon Martí begins with a salutation to God, Mary, Dominican,

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[42] Peter of Blois's letter is found in English translation in the Medieval Sourcebook on the Web (www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1198peterblois-jews.html) and the Latin text is found in *PL* 207, pp. 448–449.

[43] The text reads: "I am sending you this book, which I have just completed, putting down in writing what a Jew, who used to discuss such things with me, affirmed about his law as opposed to our religion, and what I answered to his objections, in support of our faith. I do not know where he was born, but having completed his studies in Mayence, he was very knowledgeable about his law as well as our literature, and his mind was trained in the Scriptures and the polemic against us. A frequent visitor, he often came to my house as much for business matters as to visit with me, since I was important to him in these two ways. Together, we had amicable discussions about the Scriptures and our religion." Quoted from Gilbert Crispin, *Disputatio Iudei et Christiani*, in Dahan, *The Christian Polemic against the Jews in the Middle Ages*, p. 25. The Latin Text can be found in *The Works of Gilbert Crispin, Abbot of Westminster*, eds. Anna Sapir Abulafia and G.R. Evans (London, 1986), p. 11.

[44] On Peter of Cornwall, see Dahan, *The Christian Polemic against the Jews in the Middle Ages*, pp. 61–62. See also R.W. Hunt, "The Disputation of Peter of Cornwall against Symon the Jew" in *Studies in Honor of F.M. Powicke* (Oxford, 1948), pp. 143–156.

and the Dominican martyr Peter of Verona (1206–1252), and then states that he intends to collect together "certain authorities of the Old Testament, by which will be proven, firstly and principally, the coming of Christ, and secondly some other articles of the Christian faith, to illuminate the blindness of the Jews and to subdue their hardened hearts, or to bridle their maliciousness and to confound their unfaithfulness."[45] This prayer is in a petitionary prayer form and out of this prayer flows the explanation why the author was writing the treatise.

We have another example that appears in the prologue to *Scrutinium Scripturarum* (1434) of Pablo de Sancta Maria. The *converso* (recent convert from Judaism) bishop of Burgos tells his readers that the main objective of his presentation is to teach the Jews how to interpret their own scriptures, as Jesus told the Jews of his day ("*Search your scriptures*" in John 5:39). He states that he is writing this work

> (t)o pursue the errors of the Jews, in particular the main ones which prevent or hinder them from knowing the true Messiah. This is achieved by demonstrating, through a genuine study of the Scriptures, that the Messiah is the true Christ, and that they, because of their dishonorable intentions, failed in their search. Secondly, because several even of those who adhere to the true faith are often perplexed about certain things found in the sacred scriptures, or produced by the Church or the holy fathers, (for they are unfamiliar with their line of argument) scrutinize those sources with a degree of enthusiasm in an attempt to discover what they mean. As the Psalm says, "Your testimonies, O Lord, are wonderful, therefore my soul has examined them." It is in order to encourage the enthusiasm shown by such people, by using logical arguments which banish their incomprehension, that the second part has been written.[46]

Paul of Burgos then goes on to explain how he will precede in the two sections of the *Scrutinium Scripturarum*, that is, a dialogue between Saul and Paul in the first part, and a "primer" in the second part

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[45] Raimundi Martini, *Capistrum Iudaeorum*, ed. Adolfo Robles Sierra (Würzburg, 1990), p. 54.

[46] Paul of Burgos, *Scrutinium Scripturarum*. The text used is that edited by Sanctoris and printed in Burgos in 1591. The text and translation have been provided by Dr. Gareth Lloyd Jones of Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Wale at Bangor. On Paul of Burgos, see G. Lloyd Jones, "Paul of Burgos and the *Adversus Judaeos* Tradition" in *Henoch: Historical and Philological Studies on Judaism*, XXI, no. 3 (December 1999), pp. 313–329.

wherein an instructor teaches his disciple. Then he presents his call for divine assistance:

> If one is to carry out both of these studies effectively, divine assistance is necessary. I therefore pray with the Psalmist, "Give me understanding and I will examine your law, "or your commands, so that I may deservedly acquire the merit which accrues from keeping the divine precepts. Concerning which the Psalmist says further, "And I will keep it with my whole heart." For obeying the laws he receives the highest recompense, as the text says, "In observing them there is great reward." May Christ the son of God grant this.[47]

Here the prayer is directed to the main objective of this inquiry: understanding the words of Scripture in order to arrive at the Christian truth. Paul of Burgos and other polemical Christian authors, therefore, focused on the oneness of God, the three Divine Persons within the Trinity, the messiahship and divinity of Jesus, and the acceptance of these realities in faith and practice, i.e., the active church community. As we have seen with Jewish and Muslim polemical works, these authors are not overtly concerned with their contemporary historical and social context in which they are writing; rather they are concerned with writing a text that will have everlasting value for all Christians everywhere and for all times to combat the errors of the Jews and Muslims living in their midst until the end times when eventually they will all convert to Christianity.

Alonso de Espina and Polemical Prayer

The Franciscan Alonso de Espina (d.c. 1464) wrote a treatise around the year 1460 that has many of the common characteristics of the Jewish, Muslim and Christian polemical tradition but also focuses quite heavily on the historical and social context of his time. As polemical writers before him, Alonso invokes divine assistance as he began his *Fortalitium Fidei* in which he tried to defend Christianity from the enemies of the Church that were living in fifteenth-century Spain.[48] In his rather lengthy prologue to the work—which sets his

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[47] Paul of Burgos, *Scrutinium Scripturarum*.

[48] On Alonso de Espina, see Alisa Meyühas Ginio, *La forteresse de la foi. La vision du monde d'Alonso de Espina, moine espagnol (?–1466)* (Paris, 1998); idem, *De bello iudaeorum. Fray Alonso de Espina y su Fortalitium fidei (Fontes Iudaeorum Regni Castellae, VIII)*

treatise off from almost all other polemical treatises—, Alonso first sings the praises of God in an extensive section before he complains about these enemies he needs to confront: "O God Most High, many are they who own these things [the praises of God, which he prays before this section][49] with their lips whose hearts are far from you. Some strive to subvert this truth both by words and deeds, some of whom are heretics and false Christians, others Jews, others Saracens, others truly devils."[50] The charge the main enemies of Christianity—especially the Jews—subvert the truth is a common feature of medieval polemical writings. The charge that they do this by words and deeds is balanced in the main text by focusing in on how the words and deeds of Jesus bring truth and salvation.[51] This opening line of the prologue—after the "praises of God" section—begins a very long description of the social and religious situation of Christians in the middle of the fifteenth century. This description distinguishes Alonso's prologue from all other Jewish, Muslim and Christian polemical writers.

Alonso then moves on to speak of lukewarm Christians who were not doing anything about correcting this situation:

> There is none who investigates concerning the mistake of the heretics. The rapacious wolves have fallen upon your flock, O Lord, because

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(Salamanca, 1998); Ana Echevarria, *The Fortress of Faith: The Attitude toward Muslims in Fifteenth Century Spain* (Leiden, 1999); and Steven J. McMichael, *Was Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah? Alphonso de Espina's Argument Against the Jews in the "Fortalitium Fidei" (c. 1464)* (Atlanta, 1994). Both Ginio and Eschevarria are historians and therefore there works are more historical in nature than my own work, which is focused on the theological issues in the work of Alonso de Espina.

[49] The prayer of praise begins: "Torris fortitudis a facie inimici. Tu es domine deus meus, qui facis magna et inscrutabilia et mirabilia: quorum non est numerus. Tu extendisti celos solus: et gradieris super fluctus maris. Tu ambulas super penas ventorum. Tu fecisti arcturum et orionas et interiora austri. Tu es celsior celo, profundior inferno, longior terra, et latior mari. Tu es in cuius manu est anima omnis viventis: et spiritus uninerse carnis. Tu auris verba diiudicas: et faucis comedentis saporem . . . "This prayer continues on for four columns in the Koberger 1494 edition (fol. Ira–IIvb). This prayer of praise would appear to follow Francis in this prayer of praises but expands on it significantly. Most of the extant texts of the *Fortalitium Fidei* are listed in *Biblioteca Biblica Ibérica Medieval*, eds. Klaus Reinhardt and Horacio Santiago-Oter (Madrid, 1986) pp. 63–64. The incunabula text cited in this article was published by Anton Koberger (Nüremberg, 1494) and is located in the Sacro Convento Library in Assisi, Italy. Two editions of the *Fortalitium Fidei* can be found on line www.cervantesvirtual.com.

[50] (fol. IIvb–ra). This and all subsequent translations in this section from the prologue of the *Fortalitium Fidei*, folio II, vb–rb, are by the author of this essay.

[51] The main text of the *Fortalitium Fidei* is divided into "Books" that address these four enemies of the Church: heretics, Jews, Muslims and devils.

> the shepherds are few; but hired hands are many, and because they are hired hands, they have no concern about feeding your sheep, but about fleecing them. So they see approaching wolves and they take flight. A she-ass falls down and there is one to raise it up; the soul perishes and there is no one to help.[52]

This reference to rapacious wolves as enemies of true Christians is also common among medieval writers.[53] The image of shepherds and sheep finds an echo in the sixteenth century in the concluding chapter of the Cistercian Francisco Machado's *The Mirror of New Christians*.[54] Machado states that the shepherds are not only bishops, inquisitors and priests but also princes and kings. All religious and political leaders have the obligation to put a stop to the situation in which many different religionists—"Moors, Negroes, Indians, and Jews"—live according to their own personal manner and sect. In response to the negligent shepherds, Machado quotes the shepherd verse from Ezekiel 34:2–6 and then states that "there is no shepherd who grieves over the loss or injury of the sheep who are wandering about lost throughout the Kingdom of Portugal. For each follows the sect of his choice and the type of life he so desires, so that the name of Jesus in spurned, shattered and crucified every day."[55] The charge that Christians are left defenseless because of the lack of proficient leadership, therefore, is very common in the middle ages (and in this case, the sixth century), especially in Christian polemical literature. This gave these authors more purpose and drive in their writing and preaching.

After complaining about Christian leadership, the prayer of Alonso then directly addresses the main enemy of Christianity, the Jews, whom he accuses of blaspheming God's name and performing many cruelties against Christians. He points directly at the corrupt legal system for the cruelties: "their bribes have blinded the eyes of judges and prelates among the clergy and people; and the troublesome conduct of the Saracens living among us is buried in forgetfulness because

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[52] (fol. IIra).

[53] For example, see the use of this theme in Catherine of Siena's letter to Pope Gregory IX in *Catherine of Siena: Passion for the Truth, Compassion for Humanity*, ed. Mary O'Driscoll (Hyde Park, NY, 1993), pp. 44–45.

[54] Francisco Machado, *The Mirror of New Christians* (*Espelho de Christãos novos*), ed. and trans. Mildred Evelyn Vieira and Frank Ephraim Talmage (Toronto, 1977), pp. 319–327.

[55] *The Mirror of New Christians*, p. 325.

of the intervention of the aforementioned judges."[56] The basic charges leveled against Jews in the middle ages are introduced in this passage. Jews were continually charged with doing such unheard of things to Christians as stealing, trickery, plotting, and murdering. Alonso will present in the seventh chapter of Book III of the *Fortalitium Fidei*, a long list and explanation of the cruelties the Jews exhibited towards their Messiah, towards themselves in consequence—since these cruelties have led to their perpetual captivity, which they are enduring in the present, and their eternal damnation,—and also towards Christians. The charge of blasphemy especially comes into Christian awareness in the twelfth century.[57] Alonso's comments about the corrupt judges are based on his own experience as "he tried to have a Jew condemned for the death of a child at the High Court (Chancilleria) of Valladolid. On being unsuccessful, he accused the judges to be influenced by 'others of their kind,' i.e., *conversos*."[58] And the economical means of Jewish corruption of Christian society—usury and other economic crimes—has a long history in medieval Europe which finds its main spokespersons in the Franciscans of the fifteenth century, especially Bernardino of Siena, John of Capistrano and James of the Marches.[59]

Alonso then turns back to the Christian preachers who are not concerned about what is happening in their midst: "Your preachers, although few, do shout out, but they turn their hearing from your truth and attend to fables. The word, O Lord, of your excellent preacher, has been fulfilled: *There will be a time when they will not bear sound teaching*."[60] Alonso then pleads with God for help because

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[56] (fol. IIra).

[57] Robert Chazan, *Medieval Stereotypes and Modern Antisemitism* (Berkeley, 1997), pp. 58–61.

[58] *The Fortress of Faith*, p. 49. The Latin text appears in the *Fortalitium Fidei*, fol. CXLIvb.

[59] Alonso has Jewish usury as one of his seventeen cruelties that Jews inflict on Christians in his seventh chapter of Book III of his text. Much of the material in the chapter comes from the work of Bernardine of Siena, whom he states he admires much. On Franciscans and economics in the Middle Ages, see the works of Giacomo Todeschini, especially *La Ricchezza degli Ebrei: Merci e denaro nella riflessione ebraica e nella definizione cristiana dell'usura alla fine del Medioevo* (Spoleto, 1989). Also important in regard to Bernardine of Siena is Franco Mormando, *The Preacher's Demons: Bernardino of Siena and the Social Underworld of Early Renaissance Italy* (Chicago, 1999).

[60] (fol. IIra). Alonso gives a lengthy description of what qualities a good preacher should have in Book I of the *Fortalitium Fidei*. The scripture quote which Alonso is referring to is especially 2 Timothy 4:3.

he sees "no one who consoles those who grieve and almost no one who has any zeal for your Catholic faith spiritually speaking"[61] especially in Spain which he describes as a "miserable country in which all the dregs of your enemies are gathered, situated as it is at the end of the world."[62] He points out these enemies are heretics, Jews, Saracens, and devils which are the subject matter of four chapters of the *Fortalitium Fidei.* In the context of a miserable situation in which these four enemies are destroying Catholic Spain, Alonso turns to God for help and while doing so, expresses the purpose for writing his polemical text:

> Therefore, O Lord my God, I have taken thought, for the glory and honor of your holy Catholic faith, and for the forgiveness of my sins, to write this book and entitled the "Fortress of Faith." I commend my purpose to your majesty, beseeching you to enlighten me with your glorious light, so that I will write those things which are pleasing to your will, for the consolation of the faithful and for the defense of your most holy faith. Whatever may appear well said in this book let that be ascribed to you, from whom all good proceeds. Should there be anything indeed less cautiously said, I crave a well-disposed corrector, submitting myself in all things to the final judgment of the Catholic Church, your immaculate spouse, taking in your name as the foundation of our impregnable fortress that phrase at the beginning [of the Prologue]: *A tower of strength before the enemy* (Psalm 60:3).[63]

The prayer clearly articulates what Alonso wants to express: his reliance on God's help, the support of the official hierarchical church, his own inadequacies in writing such a book, and the defensive posture that he finds himself in. This prayer concludes the prologue which is an extended prayer itself. In it Alonso has clearly laid out for his readers the historical, social and religious problems that he had to confront. His prayer is that God would help motivate those who were responsible for making Spain a truly Catholic country. His prayer is answered with the establishment of the Spanish Inquisition in 1478 and the expulsion of the Jews and Muslims in the last decade of the fifteenth century. Although he died before he saw this take place, his prayer that introduces the *Fortalitium Fidei* is a testimony to his wish that these enemies of the Christian faith would be eliminated from Spain.

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[61] (fol. IIra).
[62] (fol. IIra).
[63] (fol. IIra–b).

Alonso de Espina's Polemical Approach to Jewish and Muslim Prayer

A close examination of the prologue of Alonso de Espina reveals some common features between him and other polemical authors. These authors, by the use of a petitionary prayer form, ask for divine help in their apologetic/polemical endeavor. The prayer functions as a way to explain why it is that the author is writing the book; that is, an apologetic defense of their faith. Within the prayer itself, the problem is set forth which will be addressed in the main body of the text. Most often this means that the author will state what theological problem is that is in need of being addressed; for example, a Muslim author will state that he needs to correct the Christian belief in the divinity of Jesus. Probably the most common feature of all these texts appears when the author states his own inadequacy for accomplishing the task at hand, and this is why the prayer form of the prologue becomes so important. Divine help is needed because the seemingly humble author is inadequate to take up the task to write a defense of the true faith. In most cases, the reality is that author is more that equipped to do the task at hand.

The uniqueness of the prologue to the *Fortalitium Fidei* is that the Franciscan author incorporates many of the essential elements of the prologue of Christian polemical literature of the middle ages, but also puts these in the context of the historical, social and religious situation in which he is living: fifteenth-century Spain in which Christianity finds itself attacked on all sides by its enemies: Jews, Muslims, heretics and demons. His prayer thus becomes "incarnate" in the living reality that he is so concerned about in the prologue. The main body of his text is intended not only to be a resource for future preachers and writers but also a resource for those who are addressing the enemies of the church that are living in the present situation in Spain. His prayer, therefore, exists on two different levels: generally it is for all Christians everywhere and always; and specifically for faithful Christians who are living in Spain in the middle of the fifteenth century.

It is important to see the prologue of the *Fortalitium Fidei* in the context of what Alonso states in the body of the text itself. When we look at what Alonso actually knows and writes about Jews and Muslims and their practice of prayer, we see that in many cases he was speaking from a lack of real personal knowledge. Research into

Book III of the *Fortalitium Fidei* leads to the conclusion that what Alonso knew about Judaism comes from previous Christian polemical literature.[64] However, in the final chapter of Book III on the Jews, Alonso claims that he engaged in a conversion with a prominent Jewish scholar for four years,[65] and from this encounter he determined that there are three types of Jewish literature found in the Talmud: civil and criminal legal material pertaining to living among the nations; laws pertaining to food laws, things of the world, sacrifices, prayers and festivals; certain historical material such as the creation of the world and the life of the ancient patriarchs; and theological matters such as the resurrection of the dead, day of judgment, hell and paradise. Unfortunately he did not elaborate on what he knew about the prayers and festivals for us to know anything about his own experience and personal knowledge of the Jewish prayer life. On one occasion, however, he does mention that Jews have four prayers they say in common which reveals their contempt for Christianity.[66]

He also knew about various Jewish doctrines which he incorporated into a chapter (chapter three of Book III) where he presents the diversity of the beliefs of the Jews to show how divided they are among themselves in such doctrines as the existence of souls after death, the resurrection of the dead, and the identity and role of the Messiah. His presentation led him to the conclusion that the Jews were "just as sheep without a shepherd . . . because they have abandoned the true shepherd, whom, from his way and doctrine, they have been distancing themselves, he who was the true Messiah Jesus Christ our Lord, who came to them to show them the right way lest they would perish, because he is *the way, truth and life* (John 14:6)." Instead of following the way and doctrine of Jesus Christ, they wander in their blindness and infidelity while clinging to "the

[64] Alisa Meyühas Ginio, *La forteresse de la foi*, especially pp. 68–73; McMichael, *Was Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah*, pp. 57–106.

[65] "Unde expertus sum in hoc causu cum venerit ad me quidam de sapientioribus Iudeis istius regni qui mecum conferens de secretis legis, affirmavit se veraciter credere fidem Christi, et quod ad hoc inductus erat diligenti studio scripturarum non solum Biblie sed etiam Thalmuth et philosophorum. Cumque ab eo quarerem quare non efficiebatur Christianus." (fol. CLXXXIvb)

[66] This comes in chapter seven of Book III, on the seventeen cruelties that the Jews inflict upon Christians.

Law of the Pharisees."[67] The only Jewish practice he mentions in the chapter concerns the Karaite controversy about the lighting of candles on the Sabbath, which Alonso believes to be a conflict between Pharisees and Sadducees.[68] This is actually a later controversy between the "Rabbinate Jews" and the Karaites.[69] Therefore Alonso was not concerned with knowing anything about Jewish prayer and its meaning in Jewish life. His concern was primarily to show the errors of the Jews as they relate to the Christian faith.

Alonso's approach to Muslims deals directly with Muslim prayer practices. Most of his material for his presentation does not come from his own experience, but that of others. An analysis of Book IV ("On the Saracens") of the *Fortalitium Fidei* reveals that Alonso borrowed, in regard to the Qur'an quotations from "second-hand Koranic versions"—Ricoldo de Montecrose's *Reprobatio Alchoranis*—and borrowed most of his other material from previous polemical authors.[70] However Alonso gained knowledgeable about certain religious practices of Muslims "by someone who had been in Granada shortly

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[67] "Et extunc usque nunc credunt isti Judei in lege Phariseorum et propter talia accidentia voluuntur semper de una fide in alteram et cursunt devii et mutabiles, sicut oves sine pastore ab illo tunc quoniam dimiserunt verum pastorem quem hebebant elongantes se ab eius via et doctrina, qui fuit verus Messias Jehus Christe Dominus noster, qui venit eis ad ostendendum viam rectam ne perirent cum *sit via veritas et vita*, Joannis xiiii." (fol. LXXXrb)

[68] "Secundum Saducei habebant maiorem potestatem et non incendebunt candelas in nocte dieque Sabbati in aliquo loco totius Iudaismi et inter Phariseos erant tres fratres honorabiles et maior horum vocabatur Rabi Nahamia qui semper testabantur et eis disciplicebat, quia lex Phariseorum non implebatur inter eos quousque unus eorum propter honorem sue legis exposuit se periculo mortis incendens candelam die Sabbati publice, propter quod commota fuit tota villa et fuerunt magne contentiones inter eos in tantum quod utraque pars habuit venire coram rege Alfonso . . ." (fol. LXXXrb). According to Spanish historian Yitzhak Baer: "In 1178, during the reign of Alphonso VIII of Castile (1158–1214), there was a persecution of the Karaites led by R. Joseph ibn Alfakhar and R. Todros Abulafia. According to both Abner [of Burgos] and Alonso, this is from the testimony of R. Moses de Leon." Quoted from his *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, vol. 2, trans. Louis Schoffman et al. (Philadelphia, 1961–66), pp. 390–391.

[69] Karaites and Rabbanite Jews disagreed over liturgy, ritual slaughter and the lighting of Sabbath lights. On this controversy, see Daniel Frank, "Karaite Ritual" in *Judaism in Practice*, pp. 248–264.

[70] Ana Echevarria provides an overview of these sources for the *Fortalitium Fidei* in her *The Fortress of Faith*, pp. 83–100 and the Appendix I, pp. 217–219. She states that Alonso had access to a collection of manuscripts of a polemical nature against Islam (p. 98).

before."[71] He knows they pray five times a day,[72] that ablutions are necessary for prayer,[73] that they orientate themselves toward Mecca (*versus meridiem ubi est Mecha*),[74] and that they pray as a community on Friday.[75] In regard to the Muslim practice of praying five times a day, Alonso does not mention what the content of this prayer is.

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[71] Echevarria, *The Fortress of Faith*, p. 153.

[72] "Primum preceptum Machometi est quod quinquies tantum sarraceni orent. Unde autem habuit hunc numerum orandi quinarium patuit supra consideratione quarta in illa fatua visione, sed tamen ut veritatem dicamus hoc utique Machometus ideo precepit quia consilio doctorum suorum mediatricem inter iudeorum et christianorum legem effici voluit suam, non probitatis sui nec adiutorio Dei. Iudei enim secundum legem ter in die orant, christiani vero sepcies, sed iste nec ter nec septies sed quinquies orando terminum inter utrunque posuit." (fol. CCIXrb)

[73] "Secundum preceptum Machometi est quod antequam orent ut perfectam mundiciam habeant culum veretrum manus, brachia, os, nares, aures, oculos, capillos, decentissime ad ultimum pedes lavent. Quod precipit fieri post coytum et egestionem nisi fuerint egroti vel in itinere. Et si forte sit eis impossibile aquam reperire, tunc precipit eos mundari pulvere terre munde quasi aqua tergendo quam ablucionem precipit etiam fieri modo verso. Sed talis ablucio membrorum non pertinet ad orationem. Ad orationem quidem pertinet mundari intrinsecus, non extrinsecus. Mundicia autem de ablucione membrorum pertinebat cultoribus stelle Veneris. Qui volentes eam orare ad modum femine se optabant ora et oculos tingentes, quia vero punctos stelle Veneris rex efectus est, ideo hoc precipit. Discordat autem hec ablucio a baptismate christianorum multipliciter: Primo, quia baptisma christianorum solum semel fit. "Una est enim fides et unum baptisma", secundum Apostolum. Baptisma vero sarracenorum multiplicatur. Secundo, quia baptisma christianorum non solum mundat corpus sed etiam animam cum sit aqua Spiritus Sancti. Baptisma vero saracenorum solum se extendit ad ablucionem membrorum propter inmundiciam eorum ex coytu vel egestione, ut patet in Alcorano." (fol. CCXva)

[74] "Duodecimum preceptum Machometi est quod sarraceni faciant oracionem versus meridiem ubi est Mecha. Unde dicit in Alcorano in persona Dei sibi alloquentis et suis credentibus. Tibi tamen nunc huc illuc aspicienti tuisque ad meorum propriorum noticiam qui sunt mediatores gencium testes suum prophetam proprium testem habentes oracionis locum veracem et ydoneum, Deo testificante videlicet versus Mequam templique sui medium quod Abraham primo fundavit. Firmaboque super ubicumque fuerit faciem tuam orando vertas. Talem locum orandi instituit Machometus ut diferret a iudeis qui orant versus occidentem, et a nobis christianis qui oramus versus orientem, quia ad orientem crucifixus est Christus et ad orientem ascendit in celum. Et in tantum volunt esse discordes a christianis quod in nullo penitus velent confirmari. Unde nos sedentes honorifice super mensas manducamus, ipsi vero super terram iacentes; nos cum mapis, ipsi sine mapis; nos sardinas per caudam accipientes mittimus in ignem, ipsi vero per caput eas accipiunt et caudas versus ignem mittunt et sic de aliis innumeris quae secum conversantes experimento cognoscunt." (fol. CCXI-rb–CCXIIva)

[75] "Undecimum preceptum Machometi est quod sarraceni observent inquietem diem Veneris quod ipse fecit propter duo. Primum est quia ipse puncto stelle Veneris rex effectus fuit ut supra patuit precepto secundo. Secundum vero est ut a lege sua diferret lex Moysi quae precipit Sabbatum observari, et lex Christi que precipit diem Dominicam." (fol. CCXIrb)

He appears to be just like other Christian polemicist by comparing Muslim prayer "to the monastic hours; they knew about the reading of the Koran and repetition of the verses, but none mentioned *raka'āt* or other gestures which might have surprised them."[76]

Alonso is aware of what parts of the body are washed in the Muslim practice of ablutions before prayer but he does not know "the distinction made between various types of ablution (*ghusel, wudū'* . . .).[77] He is aware that Muslims must perform the ablutions if they have had sexual relations or have defecated, but not if they were sick or on a journey. He also states that Muslims can use sand if they cannot find water for their ablutions. But Alonso states that ablution only concerns the external washing of the body, not the internal. He states that this ablution really pertains to the cult of the star Venus (the Roman goddess of sexual love and generation). Alonso states: "The cleansing of the members (in ablution) pertained to the worshipers of the star of Venus. Those who, longing for her, were wishing themselves to pray to her in a feminine manner, were those who were moistening the mouths and eyes, since once they have been pricked by the star of Venus he is made a king, and so he commanded it."[78] Here we see Alonso makes the common mistake of medieval Christian authors in making the connection between prayer on Friday and the cult of Venus (*stele Veneris*)—a claim that was made "in the context of the accusations of idolatry made by the Christian Fathers."[79] Friday is also Muhammad's choice because it was "the day when Muhammad was crowned king, according to the legend of his marriage to Khadīdja, lady of Corozan."[80] As to the Muslim orientation toward Mecca when they pray, Alonso correctly associates the place of prayer (the Ka'ba) with Abraham who built it, but he calls it their temple (*templum*) and "Muhammad's efforts to be different from the two older religions [Judaism and

[76] Echevarria, *The Fortress of Faith*, p. 154.
[77] Echevarria, *The Fortress of Faith*, p. 154.
[78] "Sed talis ablucio membrorum non pertinet ad orationem. Ad orationem quidem pertinet mundari intrinsecus, non extrinsecus. Mundicia autem de ablucione membrorum pertinebat cultoribus stelle Veneris. Qui volentes eam orare ad modum femine se optabant ora et oculos tingentes, quia vero punctos stelle Veneris rex efectus est, ideo hoc precipit." (fol. CCXva)
[79] Echevarria, *The Fortress of Faith*, p. 160.
[80] Echevarria, *The Fortress of Faith*, p. 160.

Christianity] would be the cause for his commandments—he still forgets it is really a Koranic commandment, and not Muhammad's."[81]

The basic charge against Muslims in the *Fortalitium Fidei* is that of idolatry. Since the Qur'an was not really from God but from the devil, the focal point for Muslim prayer, the Kabbah, must have evil associated with it. In the first part of Alonso's presentation of the rite of pilgrimage (hajj) that takes place in Mecca, he provides a number of factual items: that Muslims wear a seamless garment; they circumambulate the Ka'ba (the *domus*); they throw stones at the devil; Adam built the house after he was expelled from paradise and Abraham came there to pray; and this is the place where Muhammad was born. He makes the common mistake of believing that all Muslims went on the pilgrimage to Mecca every year. Alonso provides a quote from Petrus Alfonsi (c. 1076–c. 1110), a converted Jew, that refutes the association of Abraham with the Ka'ba; rather the Ka'ba is connected with the two sons of Lot: Amon and Moab. The two stones—embedded in the Ka'ba—appear in this presentation:

> two holy stones, one white, one black, were named Chamos and Mercurius respectively, by Amon and Moab, the sons of Lot. These were worshipped by the Arabs, each at a separate solar festival, and Muhammad, unable entirely to destroy the worship, had the stone, which was carved in the wall of the Ka'bah, and the Mars stone, which was carved back and front, buried in the ground.[82]

Since the intent of Petrus Alfonsi was to polemicize against Muslims,[83] Alonso's use of this quote reveals that the fifteenth-century Franciscan had the same purpose.

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[81] Echevarria, *The Fortress of Faith*, p. 160.

[82] Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Oxford, 1993), p. 217.

[83] Daniel (*Islam and the West*, p. 217) claims that "There is even a possible medieval identification of Muhammad (*Mahom* or *Malchom*) with Moloch; and, be that it may, there was clearly thought to be some polemic value in identifying the Muslims with the Ammonites and Moabites condemned in the Old Testament by name." John Tolan holds that "Alfonsi stops short of calling Muslims pagans, but he implies that their monotheism is sullied by the vestiges of these pagan rites. He associates real elements of the Muslim Mecca cult (lapidation, wearing of seamless garments, the Ka'ba itself) with Talmudic descriptions of the pagan cults of Merqulis (at whose idols devotees threw stones) and Baal-Peor (to whom one bared oneself and defecated); these are linked through the story of Lot's sons, Amon and Moab, in a twist that seems to be Alfonsi's own innovation." Quoted from his *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York, 2002), p. 151. Tolan provides an English translation of the Petrus Alfonsi's text that Alonso de Espina quotes on the same page.

Alonso was not concerned with a philological reading of the Qur'an or Muslim literature. He was not concerned, as his contemporary Juan de Segovia, to seek out "the meaning of difficult words, unclear grammar, and obscure reference using the sort of resources to which philologists through history have turned—Qur'anic commentaries and lexicons, for example, or native-speaking informants."[84] In other words, Alonso was not concerned about what the Qur'an and its teachings about prayer meant for the Muslim living in their midst. Rather he was interested in the polemical enterprise which was intended to show the errors of Muslim belief—and especially how that error was manifested in their prayer life—and to lead Muslims to the clearly evident superiority of the Christian faith.

Alonso de Espina and the Franciscan Tradition

The *Fortalitium Fidei* of Alonso de Espina is in a certain sense a culmination and summary of the entire mendicant and specifically Franciscan anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim tradition, which specifically attacked the prayer life of Jews and Muslims that began in the middle of the thirteenth century. Though there are Franciscans who appear to be more open to the positive value of Judaism and Islam in the middle ages, including Saint Francis himself, most of the friars found little reason for there to be dialogue with Jews or Muslims.[85]

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[84] See Burman, *Reading the Qur'an in Latin Christendom.*

[85] Robert E. Lerner has reviewed a number of apocalyptic writers from Joachim of Fiore (d. 1202) to Nicholas of Buldesdorf (d. 1446). Many of these writers were either friars or associated with them. His conclusion is apropos here: "Against this backdrop a succession of prophets and heretics held to the view that Jews had a special dignity. Christians needed Jews, not to prove the superiority of their own faith, as Augustine once had argued, but because Christians themselves needed to be made better and the Jews were there to help. Because of these prophets and heretics firmly believed that the messiahship of Christ, they were indifferent to improving their condition in the present era. But they expected to join with them as long-separated brothers in the last act of a divinely scripted drama, and hence argued addressing the Jews of the present with love instead of hatred. If this book had served any larger purpose it has been to counter any comfortable assumption that all medieval Christians thought alike about their Jewish neighbors. Granted that the Joachite millennialists were not tolerationists, they nonetheless stood for an alternative to the formation of a persecuting society." Quoted from his *The Feast of Saint Abraham: Medieval Millenarians and the Jews* (Philadelphia, 2001), p. 121. For the

Based on biblical studies, theological issues, and economic factors the friars in general especially envisioned the living Jewish and Muslim tradition as a threat to Christians of their day. They could see no positive value to participate in a dialogue with these non-believers except to show them the errors of their respective religions and convert them to the true faith. If the general attitude toward discussing issues with Jews and Muslims was seen as dangerous, and only to be done to refute the errors of non-Christians and affirm Christian truth, and certainly not to call the Christian faith into doubt, then they did not see the possibility that the other religions in their midst had any positive thing to teach them.[86] This would certainly be true in the case of their own prayer experience. Alonso, like the friars before him, saw nothing to gain for their own experience of God in their encounter with Jews or Muslims.

What appears to be totally lacking in Alonso's approach to the Muslims (and by extension, to the Jews) is the earlier vision of Francis about the friars who were to go among Muslims.[87] It is true that Francis—like every medieval writer and preacher—sought the conversion of all non-Christians and desired that they come to Christian truth. But what is unique is Francis's desire for peace together with

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variation of approaches of the Franciscans to Jews and Judaism in fifteenth-century Italy, see Arial Toaff, *The Jews in Medieval Assisi 1305–1487: A Social and Economic History of a Small Jewish Community in Italy* (Florence, 1979).

[86] See Thomas Aquinas' discussion on the topic "Should one have public discussions with nonbelievers?" (Summa IIa IIae, q. 10, a. 7). On the church's restrictions regarding Christians having public conversations with Jews, see Dahan, *The Christian Polemic against the Jews in the Middle Ages*, pp. 27–31.

[87] The *Earlier Rule*, 16.1, or the *Rule of 1221* as it is called by Franciscan scholars, states: "As for the brothers who go, they can five spiritually among the Saracens and nonbelievers in two ways. One way is not to engage in arguments or disputes, but to be subject '*to every human creature for God's sake*' (1 Pet 2:13) and to acknowledge that they are Christians. Another way is to proclaim the word of God when they see that it pleases the Lord, so that they believe in the all-powerful God—Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit—the Creator of all, in the Son Who is the Redeemer and Savior, and that they be baptized and become Christians; because '*whoever has not been born again of water and the Holy Spirit cannot enter the kingdom of God*' (cf. Jn 3:5)." Unfortunately this statement about the two ways of the Franciscan mission is reduced in the *Later Rule*, 12.1, or *Rule of 1223* to this juridical statement: "Let those brothers who wish by divine inspiration to go among the Saracens or other non-believers ask permission to go from their provincial ministers. The ministers, however, may not grant permission except to those who they see fit to be sent." The two texts can be found in *FAED* 1, pp. 74 and 106; *Fontes*, pp. 199 and 180, respectively.

manifesting "gospel witness," listening to the Spirit, and being submissive to God's pleasure and will.[88] What we find in the overall thrust of Alonso's writing and preaching is not tolerant co-existence or *convivencia* (as experienced by early medieval Jews, Muslims and Christians in Spain) as Francis proposed, but confrontation and polemic. As the friars became clericalized, urbanized, and changed by adopting patterns of religious life different from the early community in Assisi, so also did they loose the original dialogical vision of Francis. This more original "Franciscan" approach would be taken up once again by Juan de Segovia and Nicolas de Cusa, contemporaries of Alonso de Espina.

Conclusion

As we have seen, prayer is at the center of polemical agenda of medieval authors who used prayer as a weapon against their respective enemies. The contemporary agenda is quite different as a present-day question is whether Jews, Muslims and Christians can pray together when they come together for fellowship and dialogue. To answer this question we first need to clearly define what the purpose of dialogue is. One of the primary goals of Christian-Jewish dialogue is to come to know the other in mutual understanding and acceptance, "to strive to acquire a better knowledge of the basic components of the religious tradition of Judaism" and to strive "to learn by what essential traits the Jews define themselves in the light of their own religious experience."[89] Since the most intimate act that Jews, Muslims and Christians do is pray, one cannot really know the other and come to mutual understanding and acceptance without knowing how the other prays. Even if the representatives of the

[88] As Kathleen Warren states: "'Presence' and 'being subjected to' are the radical form of proclamation that chapter 16 presents to the brothers who 'go to' the Saracens. Living among the Saracens in the manner of Christ (humble, obedient, nonviolent, and peaceful), Francis saw the possibility of ending the enmity between Christians and Saracens and creating an atmosphere in which true peace could be established." *Francis of Assisi Encounters Sultan Malek al-Kamil*, p. 78. On Francis and Islam, see also J. Hoeberichts, *Francis and Islam* (Quincy, 1997), Jean Gwénolé Jeusset, *Dio è cortesia: Francesco d'Assisi, il suo Ordine e l'Islam* (Padua, 1988) and Giulio Bassetti-Sani, *Muhammad, St. Francis of Assisi and Alvernia* (Manila, 1979).

[89] *Stepping Stone to Further Jewish-Christian Relations*, p. 12.

Abrahamic faith communities cannot pray together, at least they should learn how, where, when and why each other prays. Prayer then becomes the door to greater mutual understanding and respect between them. And it is quite possible that they can derive a greater appreciation of their own prayer by seeing how others pray.

What we have seen in the apologetic and polemical works of the medieval period is that prayer was not seen by these authors as an opening to the understanding of the other in their midst. Prayer in its polemical form in each one of these religions becomes the means by which the respective communities defend their own faith and attack the member of the other religions. Prayer took on a positive effect in that it sought to hold onto the truth that was embraced by the practitioner of the faith. Negatively, the prayer of these medieval writers shows that they could in no way find in prayer a way in which they could find mutual understanding and respect among the members of other religions in their midst. They therefore robbed themselves of the opportunity to help their own prayer lives by learning how others themselves pray.

As with the other polemical writers we have reviewed, Alonso de Espina was not concerned with coming to know the other in mutual understanding and respect. Rather he wanted to know information about the other—and the information he had was in many cased unreliable as we have seen in the work of Alonso de Espina—in order to prove them wrong. These texts, therefore, do not help us in the contemporary context, but they do tell us where we have been in the past. The Vatican document *Nostra Aetate* (paragraph 3) asked Christians and Muslims to forget the past in order to build a better world now and for the future through social justice and peace: "Since in the course of centuries not a few quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Moslems, this sacred synod urges all to forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual understanding and to preserve as well as to promote together for the benefit of all mankind social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom."[90] Rather than forget the past, we should learn from the past which tells us that by not learning how one another prays, we

[90] *Nostra Aetate*, paragraph 3, in *The Documents of Vatican II*, ed. Walter M. Abbot (New York, 1966), p. 663.

will repeat the same mistakes that occurred in the middle ages where misunderstanding and distrust led so often to disharmony and violence. The challenge is to learn how each other prays so that we may truly come to know the other in the most intimate act of the human being which is prayer.

PORTALS TO THE SACRED

ILLI QUI VOLUNT RELIGIOSE STARE IN EREMIS. EREMITICAL PRACTICE IN THE LIFE OF THE EARLY FRANCISCANS

Jean François Godet-Calogeras

The oldest collection of writings of Francis of Assisi can be found in the famous manuscript known as the Assisi 338.[1] Scholars usually agree on placing the composition of that collection toward the middle of the thirteenth century. Among the writings gathered in the Assisi 338, on the recto and verso of folio 43, is a short piece without a title, beginning with the words *Illi qui volunt religiose stare in eremis* [Those who want to stay in a religious manner in remote places]. The latest critical edition of that document mentions two dozen copies belonging to three of the four canonical collections of the writings of Francis of Assisi.[2] Hence there is no doubt about the authenticity of the text. A few of the copies bear one of basically three different titles: *De religiosa habitatione in eremitoriis* (or *eremis* or *eremo*) [The religious dwelling in hermitages]; *De religiosa conversatione in eremitoriis admonitio et doctrina quam beatus Franciscus edocuit* (or *docuit*) [Admonition and teaching blessed Francis taught about the religious way of life in hermitages]; *Qualiter fratres debeant vivere in eremitoriis* [How the brothers should live in hermitages]. These titles suggest a

[1] See Kajetan Esser, "Die älteste Handschrift der Opuscula des hl. Franziskus (Cod. 338 von Assisi)," *Franziskanische Studien* 26 (1939), pp. 120–142; reprinted in Kajetan Esser, *Studien zu den Opuscula des hl. Franziskus von Assisi*, ed. Edmund Kurten and Isidoro da Villapadierna (Rome, 1973), pp. 1–22. The most recent study of the Assisi 338 is Luigi Pellegrini, "La raccolta di testi francescani del codice Assisano 338: Un manoscritto composito e miscellaneo," in *Revirescunt chartae codices documenta textus: Miscellanea in honorem Fr. Caesaris Cenci OFM* (Rome, 2002), pp. 289–340; reprinted in Luigi Pellegrini, *Frate Francesco e i suoi agiografi* (Assisi, 2004), pp. 371–423.

[2] *Opuscula*, pp. 405–412. Also in *Fontes*, pp. 215–216. English translation in *FAED* 1, pp. 61–62. See also Kajetan Esser, "Die *Regula pro eremitoriis data* des heiligen Franziskus von Assisi," *Franziskanische Studien* 44 (1962), 383–417; reprinted in *Studien*, pp. 137–179; English translation, "The *Regula pro eremitoriis data* of St. Francis of Assisi," in *Franciscan Solitude*, eds. André Cirino and Josef Raischl (Saint Bonaventure, NY, 1995), pp. 147–194.

lack of clarity between *habitatio* and *conversatio*, between *eremus* and *eremitorium*: with the exception of *eremus*, none of these words can be found in the text itself. In his critical edition, Kajetan Esser offers a title of his own composition, *Regula pro eremitoriis data* [*Rule for hermitages*], introducing a word not present in the text. What appears clear, however, is that the Lesser Brothers had some eremitical practice that went back to the time of Francis himself. In this essay we will examine that eremitical practice in the context of the usually itinerant life of Francis and his brothers, and we will try to understand the meaning of that alternacy between itinerancy and retreat.

We take a three-fold approach. First, we will survey the scholarly publications of the last forty years studying the eremitical experience in the early Franciscan movement. Second, we will take a look at the places mentioned in the thirteenth-century hagiography of Francis of Assisi. Third, we will study the document, *Illi qui volunt religiose stare in eremis*.

Eremitical Experience of the Early Franciscans: A Bibliographical Survey

The relation between the early Franciscans and the eremitical tradition has been assiduously studied in the past decades. In 1966, following a milestone publication on medieval eremitism,[3] the famous Trappist monk, Thomas Merton, wrote an article on Franciscan eremitism,[4] in which he connected what he called "Saint Francis' love of solitude" with the life in poverty and itinerancy of the early Franciscans.

A decade later, Luigi Pellegrini published an important study on the eremitical experience of Francis and the early Franciscans.[5] He later developed that study and integrated it into his major work on the Franciscan settlements in the thirteenth century.[6] For the first

[3] *L'Eremitismo in Occidente nei secoli XI e XII*, Atti della seconda Settimana internazionale di studio Mendola 1962 (Milan, 1965).

[4] Thomas Merton, "Franciscan Eremitism," *The Cord* 16 (1966), pp. 356–364.

[5] Luigi Pellegrini, "L'esperienza eremitica di Francesco d'Assisi e dei primi francescani," in *Francesco d'Assisi e francescanesimo dal 1216 al 1226*, Atti del IV Convegno internazionale di studi francescani (Assisi, 1976), Assisi, 1977, pp. 281–313.

[6] Luigi Pellegrini, *Insediamenti francescani nell'Italia del Duecento*, Rome, 1984. See chapter 2 "L'eremo: una specifica esperienza insediativa nel primo Francescanesimo," pp. 57–81.

time, Pellegrini demonstrated that early Franciscan settlements—like the Carceri in Monte Subasio, Fonte Colombo, Poggio Bustone, the Celle of Cortona, to name a few—were established in areas with an existing eremitical tradition.

A few years later, in 1989, Grado Giovanni Merlo dealt with the issue of eremitism in medieval franciscanism and with its inherent tensions and constraints.[7] Merlo also detailed the increasing importance and specificity of eremitical settlements during the process of urbanization that accompanied the ongoing involvement of the Friars Minor in ecclesiastical ministry and preaching.[8] In 1992, under a title that quotes Julian of Speyer's *Vita sancti Francisci*,[9] Benedikt Mertens studied the impact of the eremitical movement on Francis of Assisi.[10] Synthesizing the works of major scholars, Mertens depicted the evolution of medieval eremitism in France and Italy during the eleventh and twelfth centuries: Fontevrault, Grandmont, the Carthusians, the Cistercians, the Camaldolese, Fonte Avellana and other Italian communities. Examining then the Franciscan documents of the thirteenth century, in particular the writings of Francis himself, Mertens unfolded the meaning and practice of eremitism in the life of Francis of Assisi, including a commentary on the *Regula pro eremitoriis data.*

During the 1990s two dissertations *ad Lauream* dealt with the relation of the early Franciscans and the eremitical tradition. In his 1994

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[7] Grado Giovanni Merlo, "Eremitismo nel francescanesimo medievale," in *Eremitismo nel Francescanesimo Medievale*, Atti del XVII Convegno internazionale di studi francescani (Assisi, 1989), Assisi, 1991, pp. 29–50. Reprinted in Grado Giovanni Merlo, *Tra eremo e città: Studi su Francesco d'Assisi e sul francescanesimo medievale* (Assisi, 1991), pp. 113–130. English translation, "Eremitism in Medieval Franciscanism," in *Franciscan Solitude*, pp. 265–282.

[8] Grado Giovanni Merlo, "Dal deserto alla folla: persistenti tensioni del francescanesimo," in *Predicazione francescana e società veneta nel Quattrocento: committenza, ascolto, ricezione*, Atti del II Convegno internazionale di studi francescani (Padua, 1987), Padua-Vicanza, 1989, pp. 61–77; reprinted in *Tra eremo e città*, pp. 131–147.

[9] *LJS* 57: "Ad hoc solitaria loca quaesivit, ad hoc in eremi vastitate resedit; sed et inter homines habitans, ad ecclesias domosve desertas solus nocte perrexit." *FAED* 1, p. 408; *Fontes*, p. 1077. [Therefore he sought after solitary places, therefore he resided in the desert of uninhabited land. But also, while staying among people, he reached out alone at night to deserted churches or houses]. Unless otherwise specified, translations are ours.

[10] Benedikt (Hugo) Mertens, "*In eremi vastitate resedit.* Der Widerhall der eremitischen Bewegung des Hochmittelalters bei Franziskus von Assisi," *Franziskanische Studien* 74 (1992), pp. 285–374 (ample bibliography on pp. 370–374). Partial English translation in *Franciscan Solitude*, pp. 13–36, 139–140, 145–146, 206–208, 283–285.

study of "Francis' Rule for Hermitages," Artemio Raymundo compared the elements of the *Regula pro eremitoriis data* to other eremitical rules and customs like the Rule of Grandmont, the *Consuetudines Carthusiae*, and the *De institutione inclusarum* of Aelred of Rievaulx.[11] And in 1999 Michael Higgins gave an overview of the eremitical movement, making the distinction between the traditional hermit—in the early centuries of the Christian era; the monastic hermit—from the fourth to the tenth centuries; and the new hermits—from the late tenth century. Higgins also situated the hermits within the religious movements in central Italy at the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries, before addressing the question of Francis and the eremitical movement.[12] Finally, in 2001, Pietro Messa, examining Francis of Assisi's life between eremitical life and preaching, dedicated a chapter to the penitential-eremitical movement in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[13]

Early Franciscan Settlements in the Thirteenth-Century Hagiography of Francis

One of the earliest Franciscan documents, the *Regula non bullata*, mentions only two kinds of settlement: *loci* and *eremi*.[14] That *Earlier Rule* does not, of course, mention any particular place by name. None of the writings of Francis does, but the early hagiography of the saint of Assisi mentions such places here and there and gives some information about places where the early brothers established a settlement. Let us consider, in chronological order, the *Vita beati Francisci*[15] written by Thomas of Celano after the canonization of Francis by Gregory IX in 1228; the *Vita sancti Francisci*[16] written in Paris by

[11] Artemio Raymundo, *Francis' Rule for Hermitages in the Context of the Evangelical Life and Apostolate of the Franciscans Today* (Rome, 1994), pp. 64–91.

[12] Michael Joseph Higgins, *Saint Francis and the Eremitical Movement: The Effect of the Eremitical Movement on the Development and Spirituality of the Third Order Regular* (Rome, 1999).

[13] Pietro Messa, *Frate Francesco tra vita eremitica e predicazione* (Assisi, 2001), pp. 13–37.

[14] *Regula non bullata* 4, 6, 7, 8 and 15, *FAED* 1, pp. 66–67, 68, 68–69 and 73; *Fontes*, pp. 188–189, 191, 191–192 and 198.

[15] *FAED* 1, pp. 180–308; *Fontes*, pp. 275–424.

[16] *FAED* 1, pp. 368–420; *Fontes*, pp. 1025–1095.

Julian of Speyer in 1232–1235; the so-called *Legenda trium sociorum*[17] written around 1246; the *Compilatio Assisiensis*[18] containing reminiscences of Francis's companions; the *Memoriale in desiderio animi*[19] written by Thomas of Celano after 1247 and followed by what has been traditionally called the *Tractatus de miraculis beati Francisci*;[20] and, finally the hagiographical work of saint Bonaventure between 1260 and 1266, the *Legenda maior sancti Francisci*[21] and the *Legenda minor sancti Francisci.*[22]

According to Thomas of Celano, Francis and his early companions first stayed at a place near Assisi called Rivo Torto.[23] That information is repeated by Julian of Speyer,[24] the *Legenda trium sociorum*,[25] and the *Compilatio Assisiensis*,[26] but is ignored by the other sources. The stay was short and cannot really be considered a settlement. The dwelling itself is referred to as a *tugurium*, a hut. It is worth noting, though, that Rivo Torto was situated along an important road used by the emperor on his way to Rome.[27] But the first real settlement was by the church, or *ecclesia*, of Saint Mary of the Angels better know as the *Portiuncula*; it became the base for the new community.[28] They built there a little house, a *domuncula*, and, later, Francis acquired the place from its owners, the Benedictines of Mount Subasio.[29] The brothers had no other dwelling in the Assisi area at that time. One may be surprised that the famous hermitage of the Carceri near Assisi is never explicitly mentioned in the early Franciscan documents. It is only in the fourteenth century that the *Actus beati*

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[17] *FAED* 2, pp. 66–110; *Fontes*, pp. 1373–1445.
[18] *FAED* 2, pp. 118–230; *Fontes*, pp. 1471–1690.
[19] *FAED* 2, pp. 239–393; *Fontes*, pp. 443–639.
[20] *FAED* 2, pp. 399–468; *Fontes*, pp. 643–754.
[21] *FAED* 2, pp. 525–683; *Fontes*, pp. 777–961.
[22] *FAED* 2, pp. 684–717; *Fontes*, pp. 965–1013.
[23] *1C* 42, *FAED* 1, p. 220; *Fontes*, p. 316.
[24] *JS* 25, *FAED* 1, p. 386; *Fontes*, p. 1047.
[25] *3S* 55, *FAED* 2, p. 99; *Fontes*, p. 1426.
[26] *CA* 50, 92 and 97, *FAED* 2, pp. 149–150, 195 and 200–202; *Fontes*, pp. 1523–1526, 1616–1617 and 1626–1631.
[27] *1C* 43: "Quoniam cum illo tempore Oddo imperator, ad suscipiendam coronam terreni imperii per partes illas cum magno strepitu et pompa transiret, sanctissimus pater cum reliquis iuxta viam ipsius transitus in praedicto exsistens tugurio. . . ." See *FAED* 1, p. 221; *Fontes*, pp. 317–318.
[28] *1C* 44, *FAED* 1, pp. 221–222; *Fontes*, pp. 318–319.
[29] *3S* 32 and 56, *FAED* 2, pp. 87 and 100; *Fontes*, pp. 1404–1405 and 1427–1428.

Francisci et sociorum eius mention a *locus* on Mount Subasio where brothers like Sylvester and Rufino stayed.[30]

The first place mentioned by Thomas of Celano where Francis stayed outside of Assisi was near the *castrum*, the walled-in town of Greccio, but nothing is said about the conditions of that stay itself.[31] Greccio is off the road that goes from Spoleto to Rome, near Rieti. It is, of course, best known as the place where Francis celebrated Christmas in 1223. But it is also clear that at some point Francis and his brothers established a settlement near Greccio. The letter that in the manuscripts accompanies the *Legenda trium sociorum* was sent from the *locus* of Greccio.[32] The *Compilatio Assisiensis* mentions a settlement in Greccio as well, calling it once *locus* and twice *eremitorium*.[33] In his second and third works, Thomas of Celano calls the settlement in Greccio an *eremus*.[34] Bonaventure, following his sources, uses *castrum*, *eremitorium* and *eremus*.[35] In those sources, Greccio is mainly the theater of wonders worked by Francis. But one passage provides some information on the way Francis occupied his time while he was staying at the hermitage of Greccio. According to the *Compilatio Assisisiensis*, one year Francis spent Lent in Greccio, staying in a cell where he prayed and rested; he would only come out of his cell at mealtime.[36] We have here an indication of how time was spent in hermitage where, in order to retreat, one remained in a cell where the activity was praying and resting, and emerged for meals.

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[30] *DBF*, 33, *FAED* 3, pp. 468–471 and 504–507; *Fontes*, pp. 2119–2122 and 2158–2160.

[31] *1C* 60, *FAED* 1, p. 235; *Fontes*, pp. 335–336. Borrowing from *1C*, *JS* 39 uses the diminutive castellum, *FAED* 1, p. 397; *Fontes*, p. 1061. The same thing will happen again in *1C* 84–85, *FAED* 1, pp. 254–256; *Fontes*, pp. 359–361 and *JS* 53, *FAED* 1, pp. 405–406; *Fontes*, pp. 1073–1074.

[32] *3S* 1, *FAED* 2, pp. 66–68; *Fontes*, pp. 1373–1374.

[33] *CA* 73, 74 and 119, *FAED* 2, pp. 174–175, 175–178 and 227–228; *Fontes*, pp. 1576–1578, 1578–1583 and 1684–1687.

[34] *2C* 61, 64 and 167, *FAED* 2, pp. 287–288, 289–290 and 355; *Fontes*, pp. 498–499, 501–503 and 592–593); *3C* 23, *FAED* 2, p. 412; *Fontes*, p. 664.

[35] *LMj* 8.8, 8.11, 10.7, 11.12, *FAED* 2, pp. 592, 594, 610 and 619; *Fontes*, pp. 849, 852, 868 and 878; *LMj* 5.5, *FAED* 2, p. 706; *Fontes*, p. 996.

[36] *CA* 73: "Quidam frater . . . venit ad heremitorium fratrum de Grecio, ubi beatus Franciscus tunc manebat. . . . Beatus Franciscus iam comederat, et reversus erat ad cellam ubi orabat et iacebat; et quia erat quadragesima non descendebat de cella nisi in hora comestionis, et statim ad cellam revertebatur." See *FAED* 2, pp. 174–175; *Fontes*, pp. 1576–1577.

The next dwelling place encountered in the *Vita beati Francisci* of Thomas of Celano and later in other documents is called an *eremus*, the Speco di Sant'Urbano.[37] That place is near Narni, another city of the *Valle di Rieti*. But, in the sources, the *eremus* of Sant'Urbano is only mentioned as the place where Francis changed water into wine.

From Thomas of Celano to Bonaventure all the sources talk about La Verna either by simply calling it a *mons*, a mount,[38] or mentioning an *eremitorium* there.[39] Bonaventure is the only one to use the word *eremus* with La Verna.[40] La Verna is best known for the site where Francis received the stigmata during a forty-day retreat between the feast of the Assumption, August 15, and the feast of Saint Michael, September 29. Besides that miraculous event, a few other wonders accomplished by Francis are reported. It is again the *Compilatio Assisiensis* that offers some information about the circumstances of a stay on La Verna. One year Francis was at Mount La Verna for Lent. Although the brothers had a *locus*, Francis had two separated cells: one for eating, the other for praying and resting.[41]

There is one more settlement mentioned first by Thomas of Celano, and then by Julian of Speyer and the *Compilatio Assisiensis*: the *cella* of Cortona.[42] Even though Cortona seems to have been an important place, it is ignored by the *Legenda trium sociorum* and Bonaventure.

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[37] *1C* 61, *FAED* 1, pp. 235–236; *Fontes*, pp. 336–337. See also *JS* 40, *FAED* 1, pp. 397–398; *Fontes*, pp. 1061–1062, *3C* 17, *FAED* 2, p. 410; *Fontes*, p. 660, *LMj* 5.10, *FAED* 2, p. 567; *Fontes*, p. 821, *LMj* 5.2, *FAED* 2, p. 704; *Fontes*, pp. 994–995.

[38] *3S* 69, *FAED* 2, p. 108; *Fontes*, pp. 1441–1442; *CA* 87, *FAED* 2, pp. 191–192; *Fontes*, pp. 1608–1609; *LMj* 11.9, 13.1, 13.7, *FAED* 2, pp. 617–618, 630–31 and 634–635; *Fontes*, pp. 875–876, 889–890 and 894–895; *LMj* 4.6, 6.1, 6.5, *FAED* 2, pp. 701, 709 and 711–712; *Fontes*, pp. 990, 1000–1001 and 1003.

[39] *1C* 94, *FAED* 1, pp. 263–264; *Fontes*, pp. 369–370; *JS* 61, *FAED* 1, p. 410; *Fontes*, pp. 1079–1080; *CA* 118, *FAED* 2, pp. 226–227; *Fontes*, pp. 1682–1684; *3C* 4, *FAED* 2, pp. 402–403; *Fontes*, pp. 647–648.

[40] *LMj* 8.10, *FAED* 2, pp. 593–594; *Fontes*, pp. 851–852.

[41] *CA* 87: "Alia vice, cum fecit quadragesimam apud montem Alverne, quadam die, cum socius eius in hora comestionis accenderet ignem in cella ubi comedebat, accenso igne, venit ad beatum Franciscum ad cellam ubi orabat et iacebat secundum consuetudinem, ad legendum sibi sanctum Evangelium quod in missa illo die dicebatur. . . . Fratres de loco, licet manerent remote a cella, quoniam cella longe erat a loco fratrum. . . ." In *FAED* 2, p. 191; *Fontes*, pp. 1608–1609.

[42] *1C* 105, *FAED* 1, p. 274; *Fontes*, p. 382; *JS* 67, *FAED* 1, p. 414; *Fontes*, pp. 1084–1085; *CA* 69 and 96, *FAED* 2, pp. 172–173 and 198–199; *Fontes*, pp. 1571–1573 and 1622–1626; *2C* 38 and 88, *FAED* 2, pp. 271–272 and 305; *Fontes*, pp. 477–479 and 524.

Would it be because it remains closely associated with the name of Elias, the companion Francis had chosen and the chapter later elected as minister general, who retired there after being brutally removed from office in 1239? It is highly possible, since the name of Elias will gradually disappear in Francis's hagiography after that date. Cortona is near the Lago Trasimeno, by the road that leads from Assisi and Perugia to Arezzo and Florence, at the confines of Umbria and Tuscany. A Franciscan settlement was established in the mountain outside the city. The testimonies of the sources present the Celle di Cortona as a resting place on the road between Siena and Assisi. Nothing else is said about it. Other settlements are mentioned in the *Compilatio Assisiensis* and the subsequent documents written by Thomas of Celano and Bonaventure.

At a short distance north of Rieti, there was a church, an *ecclesia*, of San Fabiano,[43] where Francis stayed more than once. Eventually, it became a Franciscan settlement, an *eremitorium*,[44] and the church was re-baptized Santa Maria della Foresta. Regarding that settlement, the sources, however, report only wonders accomplished by Francis. Another *eremitorium* is the one of Fonte Colombo, a short distance south of the same city of Rieti.[45] At the time of the redaction of the *Compilatio Assisiensis*, that *eremitorium* was already called the hermitage of Saint Francis. Besides being the place of some wonders accomplished by Francis, it is also associated with the medical attention he received toward the end of his life. Francis invited his physician to eat with the brothers as a gesture of hospitality. The explicit association of Fonte Colombo with the redaction of the *Regula bullata*, the definitive rule of the Lesser Brothers, does not appear until the *Arbor vitae crucifixae Iesu* of Ubertino da Casale,[46] written in 1305 and the *Liber chronicarum sive tribulationum Ordinis Minorum*, composed by Angelo Clareno between 1323 and 1326.[47] Between Rieti

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[43] *CA* 67, *FAED* 2, pp. 170–171; *Fontes*, pp. 1567–1569. In those days, Rieti was also occasionally a residence of the papal court.

[44] *2C* 44, *FAED* 2, pp. 276–277; *Fontes*, pp. 483–486; *LMj* 7.11, *FAED* 2, pp. 583–584; *Fontes*, pp. 840–841.

[45] *CA* 68, 86, 94 and 117, *FAED* 2, pp. 171, 189–191, 194–195 and 224–226; *Fontes*, pp. 1569–1571, 1603–1608, 1619–1620 and 1677–1682.

[46] Ubertino da Casale, *Arbor vitae crucifixae Iesu*, intro and bibliography. Charles T. Davis (Turin, 1961), Book 5, Chapter 5. English translation in *FAED* 3, pp. 195–201.

[47] Angelo Clareno, *Liber chronicarum sive tribulationum Ordinis Minorum*, ed. Orietta Rossini (Rome, 1999), First tribulation. English translation in *FAED* 3, pp. 399–426.

and Greccio, there is the *eremitorium* of Contigliano.[48] The *eremitorium* of Rocca di Brizio[49] has not been identified, but might have been in the Orvieto area. Those are places linked with Francis.

The *Compilatio Assisiensis* mentions an *eremitorium* above Borgo San Sepolcro.[50] Thomas of Celano and Bonaventure call that place by name, Monte Casale, but call it a *locus*, mentioning the presence of a nearby church, *ecclesia*.[51] Thomas and Bonaventure tell a story of a collection of relics, while the *Compilatio Assisiensis* recalls the famous story of how, through hospitality, Francis and his brothers converted a gang of robbers. In his second book, Thomas of Celano mentions two more settlements: the *eremus* of Sarteano,[52] and the *eremitorium* of Poggio Bustone.[53] Sarteano is located west of Chiusi, off the famous Via Francigena. Poggio Bustone is in the mountains north of Rieti. Those are again simply two places where some stories about Francis took place.

At the end of this survey, a first observation is that those settlements are close to roads, and in particular two major roads at the time: the Via Francigena and the Via Salaria. The Via Francigena was the road coming from the north and leading to Rome. Opened and described in 994 by Siger, archbishop of Canterbury, when he went to Rome to be invested by the pope, it became one of the major European roads, with additional roads like the one, in Italy, going from Florence through Tuscany and Umbria. The Via Salaria, or way of the salt, was built by the ancient Romans to bring salt from the Adriatic Sea to Rome. A second observation is that there is a concentration of Franciscan settlements in the Valle di Rieti, the region at the crossroads of the Via Francigena and the Via Salaria. A third observation is that, when there is a stay, it is for reason of retreat, and the retreatant has a cell where the only thing he does is pray and sleep.

The early Franciscan hagiography demonstrates that there is definitely an eremitical component in the life of Francis and his early

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[48] *CA* 111, *FAED* 2, p. 218; *Fontes*, pp. 1665–1666.
[49] *CA* 114, *FAED* 2, pp. 220–221; *Fontes*, pp. 1670–1672.
[50] *CA* 115, *FAED* 2, pp. 221–222; *Fontes*, pp. 1672–1674.
[51] *2C* 202, *FAED* 2, pp. 376–377; *Fontes*, p. 619; *LMj* 6.7, *FAED* 2, pp. 573–574; *Fontes*, pp. 828–829.
[52] *2C*, 59 and 116, *FAED* 2, pp. 286–287 and 324–325; *Fontes*, pp. 497–498 and 549–550; *LMj* 5.4, *FAED* 2, pp. 562–563; *Fontes*, pp. 815–816.
[53] *2C* 131, *FAED* 2, p. 333; *Fontes*, p. 562.

brothers. However, the presence of main roads in proximity to the early settlements shows also that that eremitical component was never separated from travel and contact with the world. What then were the content and the meaning of that eremitical component? Some answers to those questions lie hidden in the *Regula pro eremitoriis data*.

The *Regula pro eremitoriis data*

The Document

Kajetan Esser based his edition of the text on the oldest copy, found in the manuscript 338 of the Biblioteca Comunale of Assisi. The last sentence, however, is missing in the Assisi 338, but is present in virtually all the rest of the manuscript tradition. Thus, for reasons of both internal and external criticism, Esser considered it as authentic and excerpted it from a fourteenth-century manuscript.[54]

As for the date of the composition of the *Regula pro eremitoriis data*, the presence of the word *minister* gives a definite *terminus post quem* since the office of minister was created at the chapter of Pentecost 1217, when the Lesser Brothers organized themselves into provinces. On the other hand, there is no explicit mention of either *divinum officium*, which would include the celebration of the Mass, or an oratory. Such silence offers a *terminus ante quem*: before the bull *Devotionis vestrae* of 29 March 1222, or definitely before the bull *Quia populares tumultus* of 3 December 1224.[55] In his critical edition, Kajetan Esser even suggests 1221 as *terminus ante quem*, that is, prior to the *Regula non bullata*.[56] Here is the text as edited by Kajetan Esser:

> [1]Illi qui volunt religiose stare in eremis sint tres fratres vel quattuor ad plus; duo ex ipsis sint matres et habeant duos filios vel unum ad minus. [2]Isti duo qui sunt matres teneant vitam Marthe, et duo filii teneant vitam Marie, et habeant unum claustrum in quo unusquisque habeat cellulam suam in qua oret et dormiat. [3]Et semper dicant completorium de die statim post occasum solis; et studeant retinere silentium; et dicant horas suas; et in matutinis surgant et primum querant regnum Dei et iustitiam eius. [4]Et dicant primam hora qua convenit et post tertiam absolvant silentium; et possint loqui et ire ad matres

[54] *Opuscula*, pp. 408–409. See also *Franciscan Solitude*, pp. 169–170.

[55] See Kajetan Esser, "Die *Regula pro eremitoriis data* des hl. Franziskus von Assisi," in *Studien zu den Opuscula des hl. Franziskus von Assisi*, pp. 164–165. Also in *Franciscan Solitude*, pp. 177–179.

[56] *Opuscula*, pp. 410–411.

suas. [5] Et quando placuerit possint petere ab eis eleemosynam sicut parvuli pauperes propter amorem Domini Dei. [6] Et postea dicant sextam and nonam; et vesperas dicant hora qua convenit. [7] Et in claustro ubi morantur non permittant aliquam personam introire, et neque ibi comedant. [8] Isti fratres qui sunt matres studeant manere remote ab omni persona; et per obedientiam sui ministri custodiant filios suos ab omni persona ut nemo possit loqui cum eis. [9] Et isti filii non loquantur cum aliqua persona nisi cum matribus suis et cum ministro et custode suo quando placuerit eos visitare cum benedictione Domini Dei. [10] Filii vero quandoque officium matrum assumant, sicut vicissitudinaliter eis pro tempore visum fuerit disponendum; quod omnia supradicta sollicite et studiose studeant observare.[57]

[[1]Those who want to stay in a religious manner in remote places should be three brothers or four at the most; two of these should be mothers, and they should have two sons or one at least. [2]Those two who are mothers should have the life of Martha, and the two sons should have the life of Mary, and they should have an enclosure in which each one should have his own little cell in which he should pray and sleep. [3]And they should always say compline of the day immediately after sunset. And they should strive to keep silence. And they should say their hours. And they should rise at matins. And they should first seek the reign of God and his justice. [4]And they should say prime at the proper time. And after tierce they should break the silence, and they might speak and go to their mothers. [5]And, when they would like, they might seek alms from them as little poor ones for the love of the Lord God. [6]And afterward they should say sext and none. And they should say vespers at the proper time. [7]And in the enclosure where they dwell, they should not allow any person to enter, nor should they eat there either. [8] Those brothers who are mothers should strive to remain away from every person. And because of the obedience to their minister they should guard their sons from every person, so that no one could talk with them. [9]And those sons should not talk with any person except with their mothers and with their minister and their custodian when they would like to visit them with the blessing of the Lord God. [10]The sons, however, should sometimes assume the duty of mothers as in turn they might find good for a while. They should strive to observe conscientiously and eagerly all the things mentioned above.]

Analysis of the Content

Space

Unlike the titles given by some manuscripts and modern editors, the document does not have the word *eremitorium*, but *eremus*. Two different

[57] *Opuscula*, pp. 409–410. Also in *Fontes*, pp. 215–216.

words can never be totally synonymous. *Eremitorium* appears only once in the writings of Francis. Responding to a minister who is having a hard time and apparently wants to withdraw to a solitary life, Francis encourages him not to give up and to continue taking care of his brothers, adding: "Et istud sit tibi plus quam *eremitorium*," [And may that be for you more than a hermitage].[58] The Latin word appears only in the Middle Ages and means the dwelling of a hermit.[59] An hapax legomenon in Francis's writings, *eremitorium* can be found 9 times in the works of Thomas of Celano, 2 times in Julian of Speyer, 5 times in Bonaventure's *Legenda maior*, and 26 times in the *Compilatio Assisiensis* or *Legenda Perusina*. It is, however, nowhere to be found in the *Anonymus Perusinus*, the *Legenda trium sociorum*, or the *Sacrum Commercium beati Francisci cum domina Paupertate*.[60]

Eremus is a much older word, based on the Greek *eremos*, meaning wilderness, desert, or an uninhabited area. It is interesting to note that this word was used 18 times by Thomas of Celano, 3 times by Julian of Speyer, 5 times by Bonaventure, but only once by the *Compilatio Assisiensis* or *Legenda Perusina*. In the writings of Francis it is found, besides this document, in the *Regula non bullata*: "Caveant sibi fratres, ubicumque fuerint, in eremis vel in aliis locis, quod nullum locum sibi approprient nec alicui defendant" [The brothers should beware, wherever they would be, in *eremis* or in other places, not to appropriate any place or to defend it against anyone].[61] The early Franciscans were quite itinerant and did not have particular dwellings. *Eremus* and *locus* are the two kinds of places where they would be, yet without any architectural specification.[62] The *Regula*

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[58] *Epistola ad quendam ministrum* 8, *FAED* 1, p. 97; *Fontes*, p. 95.

[59] See J. F. Niermeyer, *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus* (Leiden, 2004), under *eremitarius*. Other spellings can be found like *eremitarium*, *erimitarium*, with or without an initial *h*.

[60] See *Corpus des Sources franciscaines*, vols. 1–5, Jean-François Godet and Georges Mailleux, eds., Louvain, 1974–1978.

[61] *Regula non bullata* 7.13, *FAED* 1, p. 69; *Fontes*, p. 192.

[62] On the early Franciscan settlements, the fundamental study is Luigi Pellegrini, *Insediamenti Francescani nell'Italia del Duecento*, Rome, 1984. See also Jacques Dalarun, "Les maisons des frères: Matériaux et symbolique des premiers couvents franciscains," in *Le village médiéval et son environnement: Études offertes à Jean-Marie Pesez*, eds. Laurent Feller, Perrine Mane & Françoise Piponnier (Paris, 1998), pp. 75–95. Also Romain Georges Mailleux, "*Locus* et *Conventus* dans l'Ordre des Frères Mineurs avant 1517," *Frate Francesco* 69 (2003), pp. 57–90.

bullata, approved by the bull *Solet annuere* of 29 November 1223, does not mention *eremus* but *domus* instead: "Fratres nihil se approprient nec domum nec locum nec aliquam rem" [The brothers should appropriate nothing for themselves, neither house nor place nor anything].[63]

The *eremus* was the area where the early brothers used to retire after the labor of the day. A clear testimony of that practice is given by Jacques de Vitry, the canon regular from the diocese of Liège, who became bishop of Acre. Speaking of the *fratres minores* in a letter of 1216, he wrote: "De die intrant civitates et villas, ut aliquos lucrifaciant operam dantes actione; nocte vero revertuntur ad heremum vel loca solitaria vacantes contemplationi" [During the day, they go into cities and villages to gain some people by giving themselves over to activity; but at night they go back to a remote place or solitary places, devoting themselves to contemplation].[64] The daily life of the brothers was usually a rhythm of journeying to towns and villages, the places where people and work were, for the day, and to a remote area for the night. The pattern was action during the day, contemplation during the night.

Hence it was not usual for the brothers to stay (*stare*) in the remote places. But the need to stay would come, and our brief text was a response to that need. The brothers were allowed to stay as long as that period of time remained religious (*religiose*), that is, in conformity with the religious life that was theirs. The *Regula pro eremitoriis data* acknowledges the need for a pause, but that rest would under no circumstances be a diversion or a distraction. It was, as a matter of fact, very well organized.

First of all, in whatever *eremus* the brothers are, a certain space for the stay will be delimited and well marked: a *claustrum*, an enclosure, in which nobody will enter, with the exceptions we will note later. It should be noted that the brothers of the enclosure will not eat within it. That means they have to go outside of the enclosure to eat, and would suggest that there is a broader community gathering in the *eremus* that the brothers of the enclosure join to share a meal. Within that enclosure everyone will have a *cellula*, a little

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[63] *Regula bullata* 6.1, *FAED* 1, p. 103; *Fontes*, p. 176.

[64] *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry*, ed. R.B.C. Huygens (Leiden, 1960), I, 118–120, pp. 75–76.

cell, reserved for prayer and sleep. It is worth noting the vocabulary is borrowed from the monastic tradition, even though there is no physical monastery or hermitage mentioned, only the generic and undefined *eremus*, remote place. There is no mention of any particular building. What matters is the distance, the remoteness. The brothers who stay in the *eremus* will take their distance from the world to be alone in the presence of God.[65]

Time

Time is given, in a continuous succession of nights and days, and it should be used expediently. The *Regula pro eremitoriis data* itemizes the hours of the day. In conformity with the ancient notion of time, days begin the night before. That is why the first hour mentioned is compline, the last one vespers. Compline is when the day is accomplished, complete, that is, when the sun has set; then the night starts that will bring and prepare the new day. Vespers is when evening comes, that is, when the sun is going down and begins to set. Between compline and vespers five hours are mentioned. All together they constitute the seven canonical hours. The end of the night happens with the rising of the sun. Matins is that hour when, just before the rising of the sun, in the pink light of dawn, it is time to praise and thank God for the gift of a new day.

A day of light was traditionally divided into twelve hours. There will be prayer at the first one—prime, roughly 7 a.m.; the third—tierce, roughly 9 a.m.; the sixth—sext, midday, when the sun is on the local meridian;[66] and the ninth—none, roughly 3 p.m. Since the time of sunset varies during the year, the time of vespers will vary as well: in those days, God's sun tells the hour, not man's clock. These canonical hours were hours of liturgical prayer. They would also mark the separation between silence and speaking: silence between compline and tierce, speaking between tierce and compline. They would also delimit the activity time: between tierce and vespers.

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[65] See Mailleux, "*Locus* et *conventus* dans l'Ordre des Frères Mineurs avant 1517," pp. 89–90: "Une chose est sûre, la partie essentielle de quelque lieu que ce soit est la *cella*, réelle ou virtuelle, ce lieu ultime du lieu où la personne peut 'habiter avec elle-même': le lieu de la *quies* et de la sublime rencontre."

[66] In modern English, noon, which comes from the Latin *nona [hora]* and actually means the ninth hour, not the sixth.

People

Illi qui volunt [Those who want] are the first words of our text. Not only does the text of the *Regula pro eremitoriis data* not bear any title in the oldest manuscript, but it begins in an abrupt way. *Illi* is a pronoun. To whom does it refer? It makes the text sound like it has been part of a larger document, or was destined to be part of a larger document. Was it, at some point, part of the *Regula non bullata*, the *Earlier Rule* of the Lesser Brothers? Such affirmation would require that our text be a chapter of the *Regula non bullata* in at least one manuscript. But we do not have such a manuscript and must not retain that hypothesis. However, the style would certainly allow our little document to be integrated in the *Earlier Rule*. The *Regula non bullata* was undergoing revision during each chapter of the brothers, as Francis himself wrote in the *Epistola ad quendam ministrum* when he suggested that the text of a new chapter on mortal sins be added to the Rule with the approval of the brothers when they would gather in the chapter of Pentecost.[67] And yet, as interesting and important as the draft may have been—at least for Francis, it never made it to the Rule. The *Regula pro eremitoriis data* may well have suffered the same fate.

What our text certainly says is that there were members of the brotherhood who wanted to pause, to take a break from the daily coming and going. Since they are *fratres*, brothers, there will have to be a few to pause together: three at least, four the most. They cannot be brothers alone, by themselves, and the pause will not suspend the brotherly aspect of their life. Staying or moving, they remain members of a *fraternitas*: their individual life never loses its communal aspect. The Lesser Brothers are no hermits.

The reason for the pause is religious, that is, in relation with the way of life the brothers live and profess. The adverb *religiose* should not be understood as "religiously." It does not refer to piety or devotion. It means according to the *religio*, that is, not cult, religious beliefs and practices, but religious community as in the expression "to enter into religion."[68] The halt is in no way an interruption of the regular

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[67] *Epistola ad quendam ministrum* 13, *FAED* 1, p. 98; *Fontes*, pp. 95–96.

[68] Cf. the real title of the early Franciscan document commonly known as *Anonymous of Perugia*: "De inceptione vel fundamento ordinis et actibus illorum fratrum minorum qui fuerunt primi in *religione* et socii beati Francisci" (The Beginning or

life, of the life according to the *regula*, the Rule. On the contrary, the *Regula pro eremitoriis data* describes the fundamental aspects of community life the way Francis and his early brothers conceived it.[69]

The small group of three or four brothers organizes itself in two groups with two distinct tasks. One group will be composed of two brothers with the life of Martha; the other group of one or two brothers, depending if they are three or four, with the life of Mary. The allusion to the two sisters in the Gospels who, with their brother Lazarus, were friends of Jesus is clear.[70] The reference here is to the visit as told by Luke 10:38–42. Mary is the one who is always hanging on Jesus's words while Martha is busy doing the housework.

There is a long tradition in the monastic literature of the Middle Ages dealing with Martha and Mary. Elements of that tradition can already be found in the patristic literature, but it definitely takes a monastic turn with the writings of Gregory the Great.[71] Sometimes the couple Mary-Martha was used to explain the difference between *clerici* (Mary) and *conversi* (Martha), as in Grandmont, or between continent women (Martha) and virgin women (Mary), as in Fontevrault.[72] Most documents, however, associate Martha with action and Mary with contemplation. And if the sisters cannot be separated, it is clear that Mary's part, contemplation, is the better part.[73]

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the Founding of the Order and the Deeds of Those Lesser Brothers Who Were the First Companions of Blessed Francis in Religion). See L. Di Fonzo, "L'Anonimo Perugino tra le Fonti Francescane del Sec. XIII: Rapporti Letterari e Testo Critico," *Miscellanea Francescana* 72 (1972), pp. 117–483 (p. 435). Also in *Fontes*, pp. 1311–1351. English translation in *FAED* 2, pp. 34–58.

[69] Jacques Dalarun, *François d'Assise ou le pouvoir en question* (Paris, 1999), pp. 32–36, sees in the *Regula pro eremitoriis data* what he calls the elementary module of the conception of community, community life, and government according to Francis of Assisi.

[70] Cf. Luke 10:38–42; John 11:1–45; 12:1–8.

[71] A thorough study of the medieval tradition regarding Martha and Mary can be found in Giles Constable, *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 1–141: "The Interpretation of Mary and Martha."

[72] See Benedikt Mertens, "*In eremi vastitate resedit.* Der Widerhall der eremitischen Bewegung des Hochmittelalters bei Franziskus von Assisi," pp. 353–354; Jacques Dalarun, *François d'Assise ou le pouvoir en question*, p. 36.

[73] An interesting development can be found in two sermons for the feast of the Assumption of Bernard of Clairvaux: Martha is the hostess who receives Jesus in her house and takes care of the service; Mary is the one who has nothing to do but spend her time with Jesus; and, according to Bernard's mystical interpretation, Lazarus is the penitent who keeps sweeping the house! Cf. *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, eds. Jean Leclercq and Henri Rochais, vol 5: *Sermones* II (Rome, 1968), pp. 231–244.

But our Franciscan document introduces something new. There is no mention of action and contemplation personified in the two sisters living together. Without denying that Martha and Mary are sisters, their relationship here is not described in terms of sisterhood, but in terms of motherhood: Martha takes care of Mary like a mother takes care of her child. The life of Martha is a mother's life; Mary's life is the life of a child. The mother and child relationship is the characteristic way by which the early Franciscan documents explain the brotherly relationship. "Et quilibet diligat et nutriat fratrem suum, sicut mater diligit and nutrit filium suum" [And let each one love and care for his brother as a mother loves and cares for her son.] says the *Regula non bullata*.[74] "Si mater nutrit et diligit filium suum carnalem, quanto diligentius debet quis diligere et nutrire fratrem suum spiritualem?" [If a mother cares and loves the son born of her flesh, how much more carefully must someone love and care for his brother according to the Spirit?] writes the *Regula bullata*.[75] That comparison should most probably be traced to Francis himself, when he wrote in his own hand to Leo: "Ita dico tibi, fili mei, sicut mater" [Thus I say to you, my son, as a mother].[76] Or when, in the *Legenda trium sociorum*, he compares himself to a mother hen: "Ego sum illa gallina, statura pusillus nigerque natura, qui debeo esse simplex ut columba et affectibus pennatis virtutum volare ad caelum. Mihi autem Dominus per misericordiam suam dedit et dabit filios multos" [I myself am that hen, short in stature and black by nature. I must be simple as a dove and with the winged affects of the virtues fly up to heaven. The Lord, in his mercy, gave me and will give me many sons].[77]

In the Franciscan fraternity, relationship is a matter of love and care, and the reference is the mother's love and care for her child. In the *Regula pro eremitoriis data*, the Gospel example for the mother is Martha, for the child, Mary. Here, even though they are sisters, Martha takes care of Mary like a mother takes care of her child. There is here another variation of the monastic tradition: from time

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[74] *Regula non bullata* 9.11, *FAED* 1, p. 71; *Fontes*, p. 194.
[75] *Regula bullata* 6.8, *FAED* 1, p. 103; *Fontes*, p. 177.
[76] *Epistola Fratri Leoni* 2, *FAED* 1, p. 122; *Fontes*, p. 89.
[77] *L3C* 63, *FAED* 2, p. 105; *Fontes*, p. 1436. Thomas of Celano rewrote the same episode in what is commonly called his *Vita secunda sancti Francisci*, 24. See *FAED* 2, pp. 260–261; *Fontes*, pp. 464–465.

to time, the roles will have to rotate. Nobody is to be Martha or Mary once and for all. Everyone has to take a turn and sometimes be the mother who cares, sometimes the child who is cared for. Everyone is to experience and practice both aspects of a fraternal relationship. One more observation about the Martha and Mary role-playing in the Franciscan context: if the number of those being brother-son can be one or two, the number of those being brother-mother has to be two. There must always be two Marthas. The brotherly love is *like* the love of a mother, but it remains the love of brothers. In order to avoid any ambiguity, the duties of Martha the mother ought to be shared by two brothers. A community of brothers taking turns in relating to one another as mother and child—this is definitely the originality of the Franciscan life. To borrow Jacques Dalarun's beautiful expression: absolute fraternity with relative motherhood.[78]

The *Regula pro eremitoriis data* still mentions two other brothers: a minister and a custodian. The Latin *Minister* has very little in common with its modern English homonym. They both designate someone who has an office in a group. However, the modern word has lost its primary meaning, for originally the office is not a position of power or superiority, but of service. The minister is an attendant, a waiter, a servant. The word shares its root with *minor*, or lesser, meaning clearly that it is a subordinate position. A minister is someone who is always accountable to somebody else for his service. When at the chapter of 1217 Francis and his brothers began to organize their growing fraternity in provinces and decided to send various groups to different places outside of Italy, they gave the one in charge of each group the title of minister.[79] Someone had to be responsible, but, faithful to the Gospel,[80] so they refused any position of power: "Et quicumque voluerit inter eos maior fieri sit eorum minister et servus" [And whoever would want to be the greater among them should be their minister and servant].[81] Minister was

[78] Jacques Dalarun, *François d'Assise ou le pouvoir en question*, p. 36.

[79] Cf. John R.H. Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order from Its Origins to the Year 1517* (Oxford, 1968), p. 31.

[80] Matthew 20:25–26 in the Vulgate: "Iesus autem vocabit eos ad se et ait: Scitis quia principes gentium dominantur eorum: et qui maiores sunt, potestatem exercent in eos. Non ita erit inter vos: sed quicumque voluerit inter vos maior fieri, sit vester minister."

[81] *Regula non bullata* 5.11, *FAED* 1, p. 67; *Fontes*, p. 190.

the word from the Gospel, minister became their word: the one in charge had to be in a position of service.

Custos has another meaning that, again, the English translation, custodian, does not completely capture. The *custos* is a guard, a keeper, a defender and a protector, much more than a janitor. The writings of Francis do not have any scriptural reference explicitly attached to the use of the word *custos*. However, the question raised by Cain in the book of Genesis fits perfectly the intention the early Franciscans must have had when they chose to use that word: "Et ait Dominus ad Cain: Ubi est Abel frater tuus? Qui respondit: Nescio: Num custos fratris mei sum ego?" [And the Lord said to Cain: Where is your brother Abel? And he answered: I don't know: am I my brother's keeper?].[82] Cain's question anticipated a negative answer. Francis and his brothers gave a positive answer. When they chose to use the word *custos*, it was definitely with the meaning of keeper of the brothers, keeper of the bond or *obedientia* between the brothers. That is why the stay in "hermitages" must happen within the obedience (v. 8), and, if the enclosure is to guarantee the solitude of the brothers, it never separates the brothers from the care of their minister or their custodian (v. 9).

Minister and custodian—and later its Germanic form, guardian—are words that will take on a particular meaning in the process of organizing the young Order of the Lesser Brothers. But whether at the local, regional, provincial or general level, the words always meant a position of service and guardianship of the brothers and of the obedience that bonded them in mutual love and care.

Action

Now that we know the where, when, and who contained in the *Regula pro eremitoriis data*, one question remains: What is going on during those days of rest in the remote places?

Orare et dormire

The brother who is living the life of Mary will spend most of his day in the solitude of his small cell, either praying or sleeping. Most of his time will be dedicated to an interesting pair of activities: prayer

[82] Genesis 4:9.

and sleep. In the early Franciscan way of life, *stare in eremis* definitely includes rest, quiet, and repose. It is a time set apart to restore, to renew: restoring the spirit through prayer and the body through sleep.

Although nowhere to be found in the *Regula sancti Benedicti*, there has been from ancient times a well-known motto attached to monastic life: *Ora et labora*, pray and work. The monk is someone whose life goes by in prayer and work. The *Cetedoc Library of Christian Latin Texts*[83] reveals interesting texts on that subject. The association of prayer and work in monastic life is already found in the *Regula monastica communis* of the Pseudo Fructuosus Bracarensis,[84] a document of the seventh century. Stephen of Muret (†1125) has it in the Rule of Grandmont,[85] and Rupert of Deutz (†1129) in his *De sancta Trinitate*.[86] Also in the twelfth century, we find Bernard of Clairvaux (†1153) in his *Sententiae*[87] and Hildegard of Bingen (†1179) in her *Scivias*[88] making the connection between prayer and work.

The association of prayer with work also found its way into some early Franciscan documents, like the *Anonymus Perusinus*,[89] the *Legenda*

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[83] *Cetedoc Library of Christian Latin Texts*, 5th edition (CLCLT-5), 3 CD-ROMs (Turnhout, 2002).

[84] Pseudo Fructuosus Bracarensis, *Regula monastica communis* 9: "Et quia solent nonnulli qui greges custodiunt murmurare et nullam se pro tali seruitio putant habere mercedem cum se in congregatione *orantes et laborantes* minime uidentur, audiant quid dicunt patrum regulae, et tacentes recogitent et patrum exempla praecedentium recognoscentes sibimetipsis dementientes quia patriarchae greges pauerunt, et Petrus piscatoris gessit officium, et Ioseph iustus cuius uirgo Maria disponsata extitit, faber ferrarius fuit."

[85] *Regula Stephani Muretensis* 55: "Quid uero sancti apostoli, quid sancti patres in Aegypto quorum uestigia sequi debemus, nisi uigiliis, ieiuniis et *orationibus et laboribus* insistere ex more postulabant?"

[86] Rupert of Deutz, *De sancta Trinitate et operibus eius*, Liber 25 *in librum Psalmorum*: "Item et sequens psalmus lxix in persona eiusdem capitis decantatur ad instructionem cuiusque fidelis ut et ipse *oret et laboret* in spe quoties ab inimicis quaerentibus animam suam diuersis tentationibus fatigatur."

[87] Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sententiae*, Series 3, Sentence 121: "Oboedientia est altare aeneum, quia quantumcumque quis ieiunus *oraverit et laboribus* seipsum immodice afflixerit, corpus suum, ut ardeat ignibus propter Deum tradiderit, nihil ei ad salutem proderit, nisi super altare oboedientiae sacrificium istud obtulerit."

[88] Hildegard of Bingen, *Scivias*, Pars 2, Visio 6, Caput 91: "Sed et multi sunt qui corporalem necessitatem patientes elemosynam cum humilitate in timore meo percipiunt, atque pro illis *orant et laborant* qui eis misericordiam suam impendunt, prava etiam opera immundissimae sordis devitantes."

[89] *AP* 25: "Solliciti erant quotidie in *oratione et labore* manuum suarum ut omnem otiositatem animae inimicam a se penitus effugarent." *FAED* 2, p. 46; *Fontes*, p. 1330.

trium sociorum,[90] and the *Speculum perfectionis*,[91] reflecting, most likely, the process of monasticization of the Order of Friars Minor after Francis's death. Francis and his brothers certainly valued prayer and work: "Fratres illi quibus gratiam dedit Dominus laborandi laborent fideliter et devote, ita quod, excluso otio animae inimico, sanctae orationis et devotionis spiritum non exstinguant, cui debent cetera temporalia deservire" [Those brothers to whom the Lord has given the grace of working should work faithfully and devotedly so that, once they have avoided idleness, the enemy of the soul, they do not extinguish the spirit of holy prayer and devotion to which the other temporal things must contribute].[92] They insisted on prayer and work, but in a context different from that of monks. They were not leading a stable life in a monastery and so, when they would take time off to "do hermitage" and stay in solitude, they would then pray and sleep, *orare et dormire*. This association is found only in this document. Hermitage is a time to rest through both prayer and sleep. Rest for the body and rest for the spirit.

Eleemosynam petere

However, as important as they could be, praying and sleeping would not be the only activities of the brother-Mary. "Otiositas inimica est animae," says the *Regula sancti Benedicti*.[93] Idleness is the enemy of the soul, repeats the *Regula non bullata* of the Lesser Brothers.[94] Hence, even during the time in "hermitage," there will be some labor. There is a time when the brother-Mary has to go to the brothers-Martha, not only to talk, but also to beg, *petere eleemosynam*, that is, to humbly ask for what he needs.

Begging is a poor person's labor: there is no pride in asking for something when one has nothing to offer in exchange but God's

[90] *L3C* 41: "Solliciti erant quotidie *orare et laborare* manibus suis ut omnem otiositatem animae inimicam a se penitus effugarent." *FAED* 2, p. 93; *Fontes*, pp. 1414–1415.

[91] *2MP* 10: "Postea faciant fieri domos pauperculas ex luto et lignis et aliquas cellulas in quibus fratres aliquando possint *orare et laborare* pro maiori honestate et vitanda otiositate." *FAED* 3, p. 264; *Fontes*, p. 1866.

[92] *Regula bullata* 5.1–2, *FAED* 1, p. 102; *Fontes*, p. 175. Insistence on prayer and work appears in other writings of Francis like the *Admonitiones*, the *Epistola ad omnes fideles*, the *Regula non bullata* and his *Testamentum*.

[93] *Regula s. Benedicti* 48.1.

[94] *Regula non bullata* 7.11, *FAED* 1, p. 69; *Fontes*, p. 192.

love, *propter amorem Domini Dei*. Because they were poor, begging was part of the daily life of Francis and his early brothers. Whenever they would need, they would beg, hopefully without shame, because, according to the Gospel, it is an inheritance and justice due to the poor.[95] In his *Testament*, Francis calls begging alms, a recourse to the table of the Lord.[96] He borrows the expression from Paul's first Letter to the Corinthians,[97] and makes an implicit connection between alms and the eucharistic celebration: sharing God's gifts. We are here getting very close to the core of the life according to the Gospel as understood by Francis and his brothers: all good things, eventually, come from God, belong to God, and are given by God to be shared.

Comedere

Sharing is a key notion for Francis and his brothers. That is why they do not simply eat, they share a meal. The *Regula pro eremitoriis data* says that the brothers "doing hermitage" will not eat in the enclosure where they stay: "Et in claustro ubi morantur . . . et neque ibi comedant" (v. 7). The brothers will eat outside the enclosure, most likely with other brothers who are not "doing hermitage." So, not only do they not eat in their enclosure, but they also do not eat alone. The Latin text of our document could have had *edant*, from *edere*, to eat. Instead, it has *comedant*, from *comedere*, to eat with, adding an element of relationship. Food is not only something that one eats, but also something to be shared with others, with companions, the word meaning literally "those with whom bread is shared." In Franciscan life, remoteness and solitude have their place, but never the whole place. Relationship and community remain always at the core.

Regnum Dei et iustitiam eius quaerere

For what is central in the brothers' lives is not to flee the world or—be it for just a period of time—escape reality, but first and foremost to seek, seriously and concretely, the reign of God and the justice of God.[98] For that reason, from time to time, they may want

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[95] *Regula non bullata* 9.3–9, *FAED* 1, pp. 70–71; *Fontes*, p. 194.

[96] *Testamentum* 22: "Et quando non daretur nobis pretium laboris, recurramus ad mensam Domini, petendo eleemosynam ostiatim." *FAED* 1, pp. 125–126; *Fontes*, p. 229.

[97] Cf. 1 Corinthians 10:21.

[98] Matthew 6:33: "Quaerite ergo primum regnum Dei et iustitiam eius."

to take distance from the world, that is, the society, like the commune of Assisi and its system that generates injustice, inequality and exclusion, and cannot be the reign of God. When seeking the reign of God and God's justice, Francis and his brothers most obviously had the Gospel in mind. After all, the reign of God was the reason why they were doing penance. "Do penance, for the reign of heaven is at hand," proclaimed both John the Baptist and Jesus.[99] "The reign of God is within you," added Jesus,[100] "Seek and you shall find."[101] Doing penance required that the brothers change, convert, turn around their mind, their values, and their lifestyle. According to what?—According to the teachings and examples of Jesus Christ, of course.

The Franciscan movement began with Francis and a few companions in Assisi toward the years 1209–1210: that is the date commonly accepted, when Francis got their evangelical way of life confirmed by Pope Innocent III.[102] The year 1210 was also marked by the treaty establishing the commune of Assisi *pro bono pacis et concordie*,[103] to the benefit of peace and concord. But because it was based on material wealth, appropriation and accumulation, and because it was generating injustice and exclusion, Francis and his brothers could not recognize in the new commune of Assisi the reign of God and the justice of God. They had to look elsewhere, and they did. Distancing themselves from the communal system and taking inspiration from the Gospel, they patiently elaborated an alternative that would reflect God's justice and manifest God's reign in their lives. But it required time and effort, courage and dedication, contemplation and action.[104]

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[99] Matthew 3:2 and 4:17: "Poenitentiam agite: appropinquavit enim regnum caelorum."

[100] Luke 17:21: "Ecce enim regnum Dei intra vos est."

[101] Matthew 7:7 and Luke 11:9: "Quaerite et invenietis."

[102] *Testamentum* 15, *FAED* 1, p. 125; *Fontes*, p. 228. Cf. John R.H. Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, pp. 18–19; Grado Giovanni Merlo, *Nel nome di san Francesco* (Padua, 2003), pp. 28–30.

[103] Attilio Bartoli Langeli, "La realtà sociale assisana e il patto del 1210," in *Assisi al tempo di san Francesco* (Assisi, 1978), pp. 271–336.

[104] For a suggestive and challenging approach of the birth of the Franciscan movement and the social reality of Assisi in the early thirteenth century, see David Flood, *Francis of Assisi and the Franciscan Movement* (Quezon City, Philippines, 1989), particularly pp. 7–68.

In his teachings known as the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus lists what are called the beatitudes: who are the blessed and happy, and why.[105] That is where Francis and his companions found the inspiration for their quest. The reign of God belongs to the poor and to those who suffer for justice: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the reign of heaven,"[106] and "Blessed are those who suffer persecution for justice's sake: for theirs is the reign of heaven."[107] Both beatitudes can be found quoted in the writings of Francis. Happiness of the poor is in the fourteenth *Admonition*.[108] Happiness of those who suffer for justice is quoted three times: in the *Regula non bullata*, in the *Regula bullata*, and paraphrased in the *Canticle of Brother Sun*.[109]

The reign of God cannot be present without the justice of God. And God's justice does not necessarily meet human justice. Human justice, as expressed in human laws, is retributive justice: people receive what they deserve through their actions, good or bad. As found in the Gospel as well as already in the Jewish Bible, God's justice is distributive justice: all things belong to God and are meant to be distributed according everyone's needs. Human justice has no problem with appropriation and accumulation of goods, even in huge excess, as long as they are not stolen. God's justice is a matter of sharing the goods for the welfare of all.

The poor—Matthew adds "in spirit"—are already in the reign of God: they have nothing for tomorrow and depend on the bounty and mercy of God and their neighbor. But for the reign of God to work and bring happiness, the justice of God has to be established. That requires labor, penance, and patience. It is far from easy. Since God's justice clashes so much with human justice, those who work for God's justice often endure persecution. Francis and his companions had to face that reality, and understood it; that explains why that beatitude is quoted three times. To seek the reign of God and God's justice was really at the center of the evangelical, penitential life of Francis and his brothers. Far from being an abstrac-

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[105] Matthew 5:3–12 and Luke 6:20–23.

[106] Matthew 5:3: "Beati pauperes spiritu quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum."

[107] Matthew 5:10: "Beati qui persecutionem patiuntur propter iustitiam quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum."

[108] *Admonitiones* 14.1, in *FAED* 1, p. 133; *Fontes*, p. 31.

[109] *Regula non bullata* 16.12, *FAED* 1, p. 74; *Fontes*, p. 199; *Regula bullata* 10.11, *FAED* 1, p. 105; *Fontes*, p. 180; *Canticum fratris Solis* 11, *FAED* 1, p. 114; *Fontes*, p. 40.

tion, it was the core of their contemplation and the core of their action. And it was an ongoing, communal quest.

Conclusion

In the end, whether we are dealing with an *eremus* or an *eremitorium*, with simply a remote place or a physical hermitage, is secondary. What is important is that our document, *Illi qui volunt religiose stare in eremis*, and the other documents of the thirteenth century clearly show that, from time to time or regularly, the early brothers felt the need to stop wandering, to take stock, to retire and rest. But that retreat was never a question of fleeing the world. Rather it was meant to deepen their quest for the reign of God and to practice God's justice more intensely. Thus, for a period of time they distanced themselves from the world to know and experience God's reality more acutely. Whether on the road, in cities, towns or villages, or staying in "hermitages," the brothers always led the same life, one according to the Gospel. Wherever they were, they were on their journey to the reign of God and God's justice through loving brotherliness and caring stewardship.

AT PRAYER IN THE SHADOW OF THE *TREE OF LIFE*

Amanda D. Quantz

Introduction

Bonaventure's *Tree of Life* provides a program for growing in faith through prayerful, creative participation in the paschal mystery. It also teaches that each person is responsible for making the ascent to God by imitating Christ, a process that is rooted in the unique reality of each human life.[1] In the fourteenth century, this Christocentric treatise was selected as the basis for a monumental painting in the refectory at Santa Croce in Florence (Fig. 1), where it was transformed into a diorama depicting the friars' identity and ministry to the people of that city. Its historical characters remind the friars of their Franciscan origin and their mission to the people of God in this bustling metropolis. The themes depicted are designed to draw the friars into Christ-centered prayer that unfolds into an active Christian life beyond the cloister walls. This essay examines the function of this narrative fresco in the context of Franciscan prayer around the cross and urban life in fourteenth century Florence.[2]

Prosperity in the Florentine Commune

On May 5, 1295 the cornerstone was laid for the Franciscan church of Santa Croce. Five years later there were one hundred twenty-three friars living in its convent.[3] One of these early residents, Bernard of Richomanis, wrote a note to his fellow friars in a copy of Bonaventure's *Commentary on the Sentences*, in which he implored them not

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[1] For a detailed study of the *Tree of Life* see Richard S. Martignetti, *Saint Bonaventure's Tree of Life: Theology of the Mystical Journey* (Grottaferrata, 2004).

[2] This essay is a synopsis of several of the themes treated in my doctoral dissertation: "Bonaventure's Tree of Life in Image and Word: An Interdisciplinary Study of Transformation through Christ" (Ph.D. diss., University of St. Michael's College, 2003).

[3] Daniel Lesnick, *Preaching in Medieval Florence: The Social World of Franciscan and Dominican Spirituality* (Athens, 1989), p. 43.

to erase the names of those who had previously borrowed the book from the friary's library. He offers an enticing rationale in the interest of future generations: "*et homo gaudet scire preterita.*"[4] Given the early history of Florence, it is not surprising that this fourteenth century citizen was drawn to knowledge of things past. According to one figure, the city had recently undergone a massive demographic shift, from a population of ten thousand in 1172 to ninety-five thousand in 1300.[5] To those who were senior citizens at the turn of the fourteenth century, the city must have seemed entirely different from the town of their youth.

As the population grew there was a related demographic shift in the intellectual realm. In the thirteenth century, Florence witnessed the rise of numerous guilds and other professional organizations. The most significant were the *studia* that became the forerunners of the University of Florence and the guilds that constituted the seven major arts: money changers (*cambiatori*), wool spinners (*lanaioli*), silk weavers (*setaioli*), merchants (*mercadanti*) judges and notaries (*giudici e notai*), physicians and pharmacists (*medici e speziali*) and butchers (*vaiai*). As one would expect, there developed a complementary relationship between the productivity of the guilds and the city's economic status. Pope Boniface VIII (1234–1303) stressed the importance of the guilds in noting that with earth, fire, air and water, Florentine merchants were the fifth element of the universe.[6] Indeed, Lesnick writes: "Throughout the thirteenth century and into the early decades of the fourteenth century, alongside the old aristocracy and the haut bourgeois merchant-banker elite, Florence had an unusually large, robust and self-confident class of artisans, craftsmen, shopkeepers, and professionals—the popolo."[7]

Among the minor guilds, artisans played a significant role in the communication and preservation of Christian doctrine and the ideology of the *commune*. The identity of the city-state determined the shape of the images chosen to represent it. These tended to display

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[4] This remark is recorded by C.T. Davis in "The Early Collection of Books of S. Croce in Florence," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 107 (1963), pp. 413–414.

[5] Lesnick, *Preaching*, pp. 20–21. According to Lesnick, by 1278 the Commune of Florence was working to limit immigration into the city. Subsequently, only the wealthiest, most powerful rural families were allowed to immigrate.

[6] John Larner, *Culture and Society in Italy 1290–1420* (London, 1971), p. 18.

[7] Lesnick, *Preaching*, p. 15.

allegorical and/or theological ideas.[8] At the same time, the significant increase in wealth among the citizens of Florence and other towns throughout Europe created a market for devotional images and religiously-based literary treatises.[9] This phenomenon coincided with and contributed to greater literacy, which expanded the market for religious texts, especially those of a devotional nature.[10]

The impact of Franciscan piety on popular devotion has been studied at length by theologians, art historians and scholars of Franciscan religious history alike.[11] One noteworthy example is the friars' successful efforts to popularize the Stations of the Cross. After 1216 Franciscans began to organize pilgrimage tours to the places associated with Jesus. In keeping with Francis's own devotion to the crucified Jesus, Franciscan theological treatises and pilgrimage tours emphasized the Way of the Cross.[12]

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[8] An example would be the image of Florence under the protective mantle of *Misericordia*, which is found in the Bigallo. The image was made in 1352 for the Compagnia della Misericordia. See Frederick Antal, *Florentine Painting and Its Social Background*. (London, 1947), p. 251, plate 88.

[9] Developments in vernacular languages such as Italian provided greater access to commercial enterprises and, beginning with Dante (1265–1321), to literature of both a theological and non-theological nature. Beginning with the First Crusade in 1095 an increase in pilgrimage activity among the general population created renewed interest in devotional objects, especially those associated with Christ. In 1205, during the Latin occupation of Constantinople, Henry VI is believed to have sent relics from the Crown of Thorns to his brother Philip II, King of France (1180–1223). Another version of the story states that it was taken from the Holy Land to Constantinople in 1063 and in 1238, given as a gift by Emperor Baldwin II to King St. Louis IX. Relics of such enormous significance had a lasting impact on the Christian imagination. For example, the image of the Crown of Thorns begins to appear more frequently in religious pictures after 1239. In subsequent generations education provided more people with access to portable, reasonably-priced devotional manuals, medals and panel paintings created for domestic use. See "Crown of Thorns in the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. E.A. Livingstone, 3rd edition (New York, 1997), p. 434 and "Crown of Thorns (Relic) in *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Detroit, 2003), p. 388.

[10] For a more detailed study of trends in medieval literacy see Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990).

[11] Examples would be Anne Derbes, *Picturing the Passion in Late Medieval Italy*, (New York, 1996) and Richard Kieckhefer, "Major Currents in Late Medieval Devotion." in *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*, vol. 17, ed. Jill Raitt (New York, 1987).

[12] Bonaventure's *Tree of Life* is divided into three sections: the divine origins of Christ, the Passion and the Resurrection/Ascension. By far the section on the Passion is the most detailed and vivid in terms of images, emotional expressiveness and personal involvement of both the writer and viewer. For the Latin text of *The Tree of Life*, see *Lig vit* (8.68a–86b); the English translation used here is *The Tree of Life* in Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey to God, The Tree of Life, The Life of St. Francis*, ed. and

Bonaventure's *Tree of Life* is a characteristically Franciscan text that was widely read because it nourished the late medieval Christian imagination. Completed in 1257, he wrote this treatise for an increasingly mobile, affluent, devout population. As the Franciscan movement gained momentum it was such a successful devotional manual that various renderings of Bonaventure's tree were added to Bibles and Psalters as well as to copies of the *Tree of Life*.[13] One effect of importing the book's images into the pictorial realm was that its themes were grafted onto the medieval imagination. The "Tree of Life" was such a compelling image for one group of friars that they cultivated a place for it where communal life was fed and watered; the refectory of their motherhouse in Florence.[14]

The Friary at Santa Croce: Work, Study and Prayer

By 1277 the Florentine Franciscans had established a *studiuim generale* where the friars studied theology. The school was open to other citizens of Florence, as well, and noteworthy figures, including Dante, seem to have studied there as early as the last quarter of the thirteenth century.[15] The fact that the *studium* preceded the University of Florence by forty-five years and the faculty of theology by seventy-two years, underscores its importance as a local center of learning. Since it was in a Franciscan setting there would certainly have been an emphasis on topics that were dear to the community.[16]

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trans. Ewert Cousins (New York, 1978). All three of these English translations will be used in this essay.

[13] The *Tree of Life* was completed in 1260. The majority of early illustrations of Bonaventure's *Tree of Life* focus on the image of the crucified Christ, such as Darmstadt 2777 fol. 43, Perugia *Biblioteca Augusta* 280 E 27 fol. 99 ro., Howard Psalter Arundel 83 I fol. 13 ro. and *Biblioteca Trivulziana* di Milano Bibbia cod. 2139.

[14] Andrew Ladis dates the painting to 1360 while Anna Esmeijer believes that it was completed as early as 1340. Luisa Vertova suggests an even earlier date, 1337, the year of Giotto's death. See Ladis, Andrew, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, 1982), p. 171; Anna Esmeijer, *L'albero della vita di Taddeo Gaddi: L'esegesi 'geometrica' di um'immagine didattica* (Florence, 1985), p. 6; Luisa Vertova, *I cenacoli fiorentini* (Turin, 1965), p. 17.

[15] Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, vol. 4, *I primordi della civiltà fiorentina*, part III, *Il mondo della chiesa, spiritualità ed arte, vita pubblica e privata* (Florence, 1965), p. 239. Dante mentions in the *Convivio* II.12 that he studied at the "scuole dei frati" for two and a half years, from 1291–1294.

[16] According to Dieter Blume, by the turn of the fourteenth century Santa Croce was considered to be an important center of theological study. *Wandmalerei als*

To the earliest friars such as Brother Leo and Brother Elias, and to Francis himself, the idea of establishing a *studium* would have been abhorrent. Indeed, Francis was adamant that the friars live simply, without all of the trappings of intellectual life, even proscribing resources that were potentially beneficial to prayer. Brother Leo remembered Francis's admonition about the danger of books leading to hubris: "After you have a Psalter you'll desire and want to have a breviary; after you have a breviary, you will sit in a chair of authority like a great prelate and you will tell your brother: 'Bring me the breviary.'"[17] In another story told by Brother Leo, Francis became enraged when Brother John of Schiacia, minister of Bologna, opened a *studium* without Francis's permission. He chastised John saying "You want to destroy my Order! For I desire and want my brothers to pray more than to read." Francis destroyed the *studium*.[18] It was also in the interest of simplicity that Francis envisioned the world at large to be the dwelling place for his itinerant brothers. Yet already in the first quarter of the thirteenth century the friars had difficulty reconciling their mendicant lifestyle with their choice to establish residences near hospitals and hospices in an effort to better serve the poor. Fixed dwelling places were deemed a necessary rather than desirable feature of this form of ministry.

By 1295, just sixty-nine years after Francis's death, the community had already split over the Spiritual-Conventual controversy. In the end the convent of Santa Croce was one of many permanent residences established by the Order in the fourteenth century. Along with this development came many other changes in the shape of

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Ordenspropaganda Bildprogramme im Chorbereich franziskanischer Konvente Italiens bis zur Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts. (Worms, 1983), p. 90. While there is no known list of manuscripts from the earliest days of the *studium* at Santa Croce, Bert Roest cites an inventory from 1430, which lists 785 manuscripts. There would certainly have been many more had the monastery not had fires in the archive in 1317 and the library in 1423. Among the books included in the inventory list are the vernacular literature of Dante and Bocaccio, several Bibles, numerous biblical glosses, commentaries and concordances, liturgical texts, forty-four canon law books, several historical treatises, anti-polemical treatises, Lombard's *Sentences* and texts pertaining to the Order, such as Francis's *Regula bullata* and twenty-one commentaries by Bonaventure. These would have been acquired by the library either through copying or as donations from the students' home provinces. Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education* (Boston, 2000), pp. 48, 211–212, 218, 231.

[17] *2 MP* 2.4, *FAED* 3, p. 258; *Fontes*, p. 1855.

[18] The story of Francis's punishment of John de Schiacia is told by Brother Leo and can be found in *KnSF* 2.21, *FAED* 3, pp. 706–707.

Franciscan life. Despite the continued growth of the middle class in thirteenth and fourteenth century Florence, the friars were hard at work taking care of the poor.[19] This included not only the materially poor, such as the orphans and widows that Jesus said would always be present, but also the spiritually poor, especially those whose good fortune had turned and others who became corrupt as a result of prosperity. Taking a cue from Dante's characterization of Florence at the outset of the fourteenth century, the problem of corruption and its concomitant spiritual afflictions were significant concerns for those ministering to the people of Florence. In a prophetic way, Dante depicted the course that the city had set for itself in canto six of the *Inferno*. His fellow Florentine Ciacco (hog), condemned for gluttony, describes Florence from his vantage point in the Third Circle of Hell: "Your city—one so full of envy that its sack has always spilled."[20]

As early as the thirteenth century, the Dominican, Fra Giordano da Rivalto (1260–1311) preached against the corruption that plagued the Florentine elite. In one instance he railed against an unjust policy that threatened women who were employed as wool spinners. If a woman failed to meet the merchants' standards on four occasions, the consuls of the Wool Guild would go to the bishops of Fiesole and Florence to seek her excommunication. She could only be absolved of this "sin" after a probationary period, and was also required to make payment to the priests who had excommunicated her.[21] The mendicant communities in Florence were occupied with pastoral concerns of this kind, and paid special attention to the disparity between rich and poor and to abuses of power. Since the primary purpose of Franciscan education was pastoral care, most Franciscans, unlike many other students, did not combine their the-

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[19] Roest, *Franciscan Education*, pp. viii, 235.

[20] Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy: Inferno*, trans. Allen Mandelbaum (New York, 1982), canto VI lines 49–50.

[21] Excommunication for failing to meet one's quota of spinning was still a custom in the 1370s. At that time Bl. Guido delle Celle wrote to the merchant Guido Neri to inform him that excommunication was only valid in the case of mortal sin and could not be imposed for political or financial gain. The custom is initially noted in the statutes of the Wool Guild from 1317. See Antal, *Florentine Painting*, p. 84. The struggle with corruption and the distortion of Gospel values was not limited to those belonging to the guilds. It is noteworthy that during the period in question, not a single pope was canonized after Clement V (d. 1294) until Pius V (d. 1572).

ological studies with the pursuit of medicine, law or the various other academic fields.[22] Rather, in their free time, the friars were expected to care for the poor and sick in their neighborhoods.[23] This unwritten rule might have been significantly relaxed after 1316, at which time the *Constitutions of Assisi* concluded that superiors could no longer require students to do hospice work and other activities that detracted from their studies.[24] Whether or not the friars were actively engaged in ministry throughout their studies, their training began with the example of other mendicants who preached the good news to the poor and who worked at placing limits on what must have seemed like boundless corruption.

The academic year at Santa Croce's *studium generale* began after the Feast of St. Francis (October 4th) and continued until Pentecost. In the summer and during Christmas and Easter vacation, the older friars left the *studium* to go on preaching tours abroad. These excursions were designed for preaching penance during the highpoints of the liturgical year. They were also seen as valuable opportunities to disseminate doctrine, to reinforce morality and to hone one's preaching skills for application at home.[25] Since the majority of the 785 books listed in the inventory of 1430 dealt with theological topics, it seems that the friars' academic formation consisted primarily of the theological training that they would need in order to minister in the bustling city of Florence and elsewhere. In the thirteenth century, Bonaventure's *Tree of Life* was one of many, new Christocentric treatises that provided spiritual nourishment. As the seventh General of the Franciscan Order, his writings had a special place in the *corpus* of Franciscan literature.

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[22] Roest, *Franciscan Education*, pp. 97 and 149.

[23] Roest, *Franciscan Education*, p. 235.

[24] Roest, *Franciscan Education*, p. 121. Students were never exempted from all forms of pastoral care, such as preaching and, for those who were ordained, presiding at sacramental celebrations. It also seems unlikely that the friars would have been detached from those suffering the effects of the great famine (1328–1330).

[25] Roest, *Franciscan Education*, pp. 118–119. The thirteen and fourteenth century mendicant orders recognized the need to deliver sermons that were appropriate for their audiences; hence, the *sermo umilis* and the *sermo modernus*. Roest cites Guibert of Tournai (c. 1220–1284) as a leading pedagogue in the development of this teaching technique, pp. 265–271, 291. Guibert's *Rudimentum Doctrinae* was in the *studium* at Santa Croce in the early fourteenth century. C.T. Davis, "The Early Collection of Books of S. Croce in Florence" in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 107 (1963), p. 407.

The *Tree of Life* was an ideal text for meditating on the various forms of poverty adopted by Jesus and imitated by Francis. In the form of a one hundred twenty square meter fresco, the painting would have been as much a part of communal life as the church, sacristy and cloister. This study will now examine the relationship between Bonaventure's meditation on the life of Christ, the devotional and ministerial themes recorded in the fresco and its missiological implications for the friars' ministry in Florence.

The *Tree of Life*: Bonaventure's emphases

The *Tree of Life* is a convenient aid for the Christian imagination at prayer. It is a succinct text, and therefore a practical tool for devotional use. On the one hand, it could have easily accompanied pilgrims and other travelers along their journeys. The friars might easily have lingered over several sections between the Hours or prayed with one of its themes while walking to the refectory for a meal. It is also compact in the sense in that its topics and images can easily be committed to memory. The faithful person who uses the text as a devotional manual has a template for encountering Christ in his manifold roles, from his status as the preexistent Logos to the Lord who accepts the ultimate vulnerability of crucifixion. It provides an opportunity to pray with Jesus' humanity as well as his divinity and strikes the balance necessary for preaching the Gospel effectively.

The treatise is divided into three sections, each consisting of four branches: Jesus' divine origins, the Passion and the related events of Resurrection and Ascension. By including a variety of perspectives on the person and work of Christ, Bonaventure sets himself the task of presenting that life in a way that both accurately portrays Jesus' identity, gracefulness, work and human experience and also invites the believer to become personally, emotionally involved with the events and people he describes. His goal in so doing is to help the faithful to accept the fruits of Christ's life that he describes. Thus, the purpose of the *Tree of Life* is to assist with the believer's ongoing conversion in the tradition of *imitatio Christi*. As a medieval Franciscan, Bonaventure is convinced of the efficacy of kataphatic prayer, which places special emphasis on the importance of images. In the Prologue to the *Tree of Life* he writes:

> Picture in your mind a tree whose roots are watered by an ever-flowing fountain that becomes a great and living river with four channels to water the garden of the entire Church. From the trunk of this tree, imagine that there are growing twelve branches that are adorned with leaves, flowers and fruit. Imagine that the leaves are a most effective medicine to prevent and cure every kind of sickness, because the word of the cross *is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes* (Rom. 1:16). Let the flowers be beautiful with the radiance of every color and perfumed with the sweetness of every fragrance, awakening and attracting the anxious hearts of men of desire. Imagine that there are twelve fruits, *having every delight and the sweetness of every taste* (Wis. 16:20).[26]

The longest of Bonaventure's twelve meditations is the Seventh Fruit: 'His Constancy Under Torture.' In this section he meditates on the things Jesus suffered in Pilate's *praetorium*, as well as the crucifixion itself, and the fact that Jesus was humiliated by being crucified with two thieves. There he also reflects on the anguish that both Jesus and Mary felt as the crucifixion was consummated. While the entire text is intended to pull at a range of emotions, those that are strongest are the compassion and sadness that one experiences in confronting the passion. This focal point is characteristically Franciscan, as is Bonaventure's own affinity for affective prayer. In order to engage the reader, his reflections throughout the *Tree of Life* begin with a creative appropriation of the Gospel narratives. This is followed by either an introspective address directed to the reader's own soul or from Bonaventure to the reader. There or in the section immediately following it, he often incorporates a prayer. Since Bonaventure presents a variety of images of Jesus, the text engages the imagination and provides many interactive opportunities to explore the Paschal mystery. By praying with the *Tree of Life* the reader is invited to encounter the baby Jesus at home with his parents in Bethlehem, "on the banks of the Jordan"[27] with John the Baptist and with his disciples in the Upper Room. As Bonaventure reminds the person at prayer, "not only the paschal lamb was presented to be eaten but also the immaculate Lamb, *who takes away the sins of the world* (John 1:29)."[28] Bonaventure's image of the Last Supper was adopted by the Franciscans in Florence and is one of the core themes at work

[26] Bonaventure, *The Tree of Life*, prol. 3, p. 120; *Lig vit* (5.69a).
[27] Bonaventure, *The Tree of Life*, 3.9, p. 133; *Lig vit* (5.73a).
[28] Bonaventure, *The Tree of Life*, 4.16, p. 139; *Lig vit* (5.75a).

in the fresco of the Tree of Life in Santa Croce. As we will see, it is a fitting image to accompany the friars' mealtime prayer.

The *Tree of Life*: The Fresco at Santa Croce

Throughout the fourteenth century, the community at Santa Croce worked to decorate the church with various themes from the lives of Jesus and Francis.[29] For the reasons stated above, Bonaventure's *Tree of Life* was chosen as the subject matter for the fresco in the communal space that was designated as the refectory. Since the image of the Tree dominates this enormous fresco, one might easily gloss over the other five panels, or treat them as a loose collection of images. And yet the six panels form a highly sophisticated narrative that reflects the values, identity and mission of the local Franciscan community.

One author described the central panel, which is also the focal point of the piece, as the most extraordinary table of contents ever depicted.[30] The side panels, which are underpinned by an image of the Last Supper, function as a gloss about living out the *imitatio Christi*. Moving chronologically around the central panel they consist of 1) the biblical narrative about Jesus and the penitent woman at the home of Simon the Pharisee 2) the sixth century legend recorded in the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great, in which Benedict is said to have been fed through charitable means during his early life as a hermit[31] 3) Bonaventure's version of the Stigmatization of Francis as recorded in the *Legenda maior*[32] and 4) a commemorative

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[29] Santa Croce was initially dedicated to both the Holy Cross and St. Francis.

[30] Rab Hatfield, "The Tree of Life and the Holy Cross: Franciscan Spirituality in the Trecento and the Quattrocento" in *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, eds. Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (New York, 1990), p. 139.

[31] The panel combines two stories into a single narrative: A priest at his Easter meal is told by an angel to feed Benedict who, in turn, sends a monk to carry out the task. Both stories are found in Book 2, chapter 1 of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*.

[32] The painting represents Bonaventure's view of the stigmatization as opposed to the earlier version described by Thomas of Celano. The major difference between them is that Celano, in *The Life of Saint Francis*, describes the seraph as ". . . a man . . . having six wings like a Seraph, standing over him, arms extended and feet joined together, affixed to a cross." *1C*, 3.94, p. 263; *Fontes*, p. 370. Bonaventure states clearly that Francis encountered Christ ". . . crucified . . . under the appearance of the Seraph . . ." Bonaventure, *The Life of St. Francis*, 13.3, p. 305; *Fontes*, pp. 892–893.

image of the visit made by Louis of Toulouse (1274–1297) to his brothers at Santa Croce.[33]

The central panel portrays the crucified Christ as the "Tree of Life" and includes a cast of characters who take refuge in the shadow of the saving cross. Francis's gesture at the foot of the cross identifies this composition as distinctly Franciscan: he who chose poverty and nakedness clings to the cross of the One who was born poor and naked.[34] The tree to which Jesus is nailed is unmistakably cruciform. Together with the group of biblical characters and the apocryphal figure of Veronica, these features invite the reader into several of the events that occurred on Good Friday. The individuals gathered around Jesus are John, the mother of Jesus, Veronica, and two other women, perhaps Mary of Bethany or Mary Magdalen and Salome, who is mentioned by Mark and Matthew.[35]

To the viewer's right at the foot of the cross are four historical figures that have special significance in this Franciscan refectory. They are: Bonaventure (1217–1274), Anthony of Padua (1195–1231), Dominic (1170–1221) and Louis of Toulouse (1274–1297). Bonaventure is firmly seated on the soil of Calvary writing the Prologue to the *Tree of Life* on the scroll draped across his lap. The saint's gaze is set on the grieving women across from him and he appears to be absorbing their emotions as he writes. At the foot of the cross he is depicted as receiving inspiration for his book.[36] Francis clings to the wood of the cross, reminding the viewer of the intimacy that the *Poverello* shared with Christ through the stigmatization, and of his continual efforts to become more closely united with the suffering Lord through prayer. His attention is turned not towards the viewer, but towards Christ. Bonaventure's presence at Francis's side conveys the community's understanding of the need for both praxis and study.

Standing behind Bonaventure are three men who lived exemplary mendicant lives. St. Dominic's prominent placement in the middle

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[33] Louis is believed to have stopped at Santa Croce on his way to Toulouse where he was consecrated bishop on December 29, 1296. See *Butler's Lives of the Saints*, vol. 3, eds. Herbert Thurston and Donald Attwater (Montreal, 1956), pp. 357–359 and Vertova, *I cenacoli fiorentini*, p. 21.

[34] Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, p. 31.

[35] The number of 'Maries' at the foot of the cross can be three or four and, other than Magdalen and the mother of Jesus, it is not entirely clear who they were. See James Hall *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art* (London, 1974), p. 84.

[36] Note that in the Prologue to *The Tree of Life* Bonaventure says that ". . . imagination aids understanding . . .," prol. 2, p. 120; *Lig vit* (8.68b).

of this group indicates that the Franciscan friars understood their mission as one that they shared with the Dominicans, who were also very active in Florence. It also documents the friendship between Francis and Dominic, and their mutual respect for one another's charisms. On Dominic's right is St. Anthony of Padua (1195–1231), the famous Franciscan preacher whose homiletic talent was discovered during an impromptu sermon delivered at Forlì.[37] His presence here testifies to the need for strong preachers who are ready to take up the cause of the Gospel. To the far right of this panel is Louis of Toulouse, whose importance will be discussed towards the end of this section.

The fruitfulness of the "Tree of Life" is conveyed by the attention given to the fruits, leaves, vines and tendrils themselves. The fruits come in several colors and are luminous and enticing while the flowers and seedpods that dangle from the vines resemble raspberry blossoms and bean cases that are bursting with seeds. The fruit clusters themselves resemble grapes while the leaves of this Eucharistic fruit are lush and delicate, much like grape leaves.

One point of departure from Bonaventure's book is the assortment of prophets clustered around the tips of the branches.[38] Through their words and gestures, they identify Jesus as the One whose arrival they anxiously waited. They also call to mind the crucifixion. Included here are the three Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, as well as Job, Elijah, Moses, David and five of the Minor Prophets: Zechariah, Obadiah, Hosea, Joel and probably Malachi.[39] In this setting the prophetic passages are used to highlight the monumental, cosmic significance of the Passion. Beginning on the lower left-hand side is the prophet Job, whose scroll reads: "They have destroyed

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[37] See St. 'Antony of Padua' in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* 3rd ed. (2005), p. 82.

[38] Bonaventure makes only about a half dozen references to passages from the prophets in the entire book, while he cites the Psalms as well as other books in the Hebrew Bible, Paul and the Gospels two hundred twenty eight times. The prophetic passages found in the *painting* are not those that Bonaventure cites.

[39] The figure of Malachi is located in the fourth roundel from the bottom on the viewer's right and holds a scroll with the words from Joel 2:1, which is one of several errors in this panel. There are several places where words are missing and no abbreviation is supplied. There was also at least one attempt at an erasure, and in Jeremiah's scroll the letter 's' appears where it does not belong. Elsewhere there are several letters that have been squeezed into the text or dropped off where they would not fit.

and oppressed my feet." Next, Malachi announces the coming of Elijah: "Behold, I send my angel who will prepare." In Mt. 11:10, Jesus repeats this formula with reference to John the Baptist: "I send my messenger ahead of you to prepare your way before you."[40] Above Elijah is a passage from the Psalms: "They have pierced my hands and feet."[41] The next prophet is Zechariah: "What are the wounds in your hands?" followed by Ezekiel, who bears the scroll: "The sun I will cover with clouds, and the moon shall not give its light."[42] The scroll found at the top left is labeled with Jeremiah's name, however the text is not from the book of Jeremiah, but, rather, from Lamentations, which medieval people attributed to this prophet: "Christ the Lord was caught in our sin." In the lower right-hand is Joel, who proclaims: "In his presence the earth trembled, the heavens moved." Above Joel is Hosea, who proclaims: "Where is your death or netherworld?"[43] Obadiah is in the middle of the prophetic figures and his scroll reads: "On Mount Zion there shall be a portion saved and the mountain shall be holy." The next figure is the mysterious prophet who holds a scroll bearing both Joel's inscription and his signature: "In his presence the earth trembled, the heavens moved." Since even the name 'Joel' has been miscopied, one can only make an educated guess as to which prophet this was meant to be and what he should be proclaiming. Second from the top is Isaiah, whose scroll reads: "He gave up his soul to death." Finally, in the top right-hand corner is Moses, who proclaims: "Make a bronze serpent and place it as a sign." The inclusion of this *pericope* can be explained by the reference Jesus makes to his imminent crucifixion in Jn. 3:14: "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up."[44]

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[40] Malachi means 'my messenger.' If Becherucci is correct, Malachi is announcing the messenger, (*prophetam*) Elijah.

[41] The choice to include this excerpt reflects the medieval belief that David was the author of the Psalms.

[42] The 's' after LUM is an error.

[43] I am grateful to Dr. Russell Fuller at the University of San Diego for explaining why "ero" is translated by the NAB and other versions of the Bible as "where." He noted that the Hebrew "ehi" means "Let me be." According to Dr. Fuller, this was mistranslated by the Septuagint and written as "ahye" which is the Hebrew adverb meaning "where." The English translations that use "where" are therefore dependent on the Septuagint, whereas the Vulgate uses "ero" (I will be), which is much closer in meaning to "ehi."

[44] As far as I know, this article as well as my dissertation contains the only complete transcription of these scrolls. The full verse in the Vulgate from which they

The panels of Jesus at the home of Simon the Pharisee and of Louis of Toulouse feeding the sick and poor of Florence are complementary images. Together they form what Luisa Vertova calls the ethical-religious corollary which Jesus indicated as the two most significant Commandments: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and your neighbor as yourself" (Lk. 10:27).[45] Moments in the life of Jesus are depicted in this panel as well as in the images of the Last Supper and crucifixion. As complementary Eucharistic images, they point to the paschal mystery and underscore the necessary balance between service and sacramental life.

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were adapted, are as follows: Job 30:12 says: "Ad dexteram orientis calamitates meae illico surrexerunt: pedes meos subverterunt, et oppresserunt quasi fluctibus semitis suis." Malachi 3:1 "Ecce ego mittam angelum meum et praeparabit viam ante faciem meam." Note that the painted scroll uses "angelus" for "prophetam",' probably because he was using a biblical model that was trying to emphasize the idea of Elijah as a messenger of Christ. From the Psalms we have David's scroll. Ps 21:17–18 says: "Quoniam circumdederunt me canes multi: concilium malignantium obsedit me. Foderunt manus meas et pedes meos et dinumeraverunt omnia ossa mea". Zechariah 13:6: "Et dicetur ei: Quid sunt plagae istae in medio manuum tuarum? Et dicet: His plagatus sum in domo eorum, qui diligebant me." There has been an attempt to erase the abbreviation I, which is a better choice given the genitive plural "manuum tuarum." Note that the Vulgate says "in medio." There is a good chance that the master's assistant realized that he would lack sufficient room for this phrase and so, tried to erase it in order to supply the genitive form, which would have translated as the wounds "of your hands." Ezekiel: 32:7 "Et operiam, cum exstinctus fueris, coelum, et nigrescere faciam stellas eus: solem nube tegam, et luna non dabit lumen suum." Lamentations 4:20 reads: "Spiritus oris nostri, unctus Domini, captus est in foveis eorum, de quo dicebamus: 'Sub umbra sua vivemus in gentibus'." Joel 2:10 reads: "A facie ejus contremuit terra, moti sunt coeli: sol et luna obtenebrati sunt, et stellae retraxerunt splendorem suum." Note: this reiterates and expands on Ezekiel 32:7 (Ezekiel c. 587 b.c.e., Joel, c. 400 b.c.e. Thus, the minor prophet echoes the major). Hosea 13:14 says: "De manu mortis liberabo eos, de morte redimam eos: ero mors tua o mors, morsus tuus ero inferne: consolatio abscondita est ab oculis meis." Obadiah verse 17 states: "Et in monte Sion eit salvatio, et erit sanctus: et possidebit domus Jacob eos qui se possederant." Directly above Obadiah is the prophet who repeats Joel's words. There is no mark indicating which prophet should be represented there. The prophet on the right side directly across from the pelican's nest is Isaiah. In the Vulgate Is. 53:12 says: "Ideo dispertiam ei plurimos: et fortium dividet spolia, pro eo quod tradidit in mortem animam suam, et cum sceleratis reputatus est: et ipse peccata multorum tulit, et pro transgressoribus rogavit." Finally, the last of the prophets is Moses. Numbers 21:8 of the Vulgate says: "Et locutus est Dominus ad eum: Fac serpentem aeneum, et pone eum pro signo: qui percussus adspexerit eum, vivet."

[45] Unless otherwise stated, scriptural citations in English are taken from the *New American Bible*, trans. Catholic Biblical Association of America (New York, 1990) or the *Biblia Sacra: Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem, ed. quartam emendatam*, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft (Stuttgart, 1969). See also Vertova, *I Cenacoli Fiorentini*, p. 23.

In both the Last Supper and Anointing panels, Jesus challenges the disciples' understanding of his ministry in the routine context of a meal. That the Last Supper was the setting for the institution of the Eucharist makes it an ideal subject for a refectory, since that is where the friars gathered to acquire the physical and spiritual nourishment needed to live out their vocation.[46] In a sermon delivered to a group of friars in a conventual setting, St. Bonaventure reflects on several biblical passages that deal with food for the people of God. In Mark 8:1, the multitude are fed with bread and fish because Jesus sees that they are hungry and need to eat. Reflecting on the story of the feeding of the multitude found in Luke 9:13, Bonaventure notes that the apostles were to feed the people with "salutary teachings," as well. In the same sermon Bonaventure also cites John 6:54–55: *Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life within you. The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood will have eternal life.* Here Jesus instructs the apostles to feed the multitude with the "sacramental refreshment" of the Eucharist.[47] Bonaventure notes that the Eucharist links the believer to the Body of Christ and that, in order to be effective ministers, each of the friars must receive nourishment through a sacramental life.

At Santa Croce the Last Supper panel bears a distinctly eucharistic message. The table is set with flasks of wine, loaves of bread and the sacrificial lamb. Judas is shown reaching into the bowl, signaling to the viewer that this is the scene in which he is about to make his exit. Jesus makes a gesture of blessing over both the food and his friends, echoing the consecration of the Host. At Santa Croce many of the friars would have been ordained. It is noteworthy that in this community's refectory, only Jesus and the apostles are depicted. This supporting panel offers a daily reminder that Christ is at the head of the friars's table and that they themselves have inherited the ministry undertaken by the first disciples. The events for which Jesus prepared his disciples at the Last Supper were, of course,

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[46] Santa Croce was the first community to depict the Last Supper in a refectory setting.

[47] Bonaventure, *Sermon 33: Sixth Sunday after Pentecost*, trans. Timothy J. Johnson from *Bonaventurae Sermones dominicales*, ed. Jacques Guy Bougerol (Grottaferrata, 1977), pp. 361–366. See sections 1, 2, 4 and 6. Johnson's English translation of the *Sermones dominicales* is forthcoming from the Franciscan Institute.

the celebration of the Eucharist and the ongoing proclamation of the Good News.

In the picture of Jesus at the home of Simon the Pharisee, bread and small glasses of wine are the only elements on the table. The compact design would have encouraged the friars to imagine that they had been invited to the meal at Simon's home. Bread and wine are, of course, the staff of life as well as symbols of the Eucharist. As such, the objects are reminders of the ministerial, salvific dimension of this scene as well as the larger narrative of which this story is a key component. In this scene the painter has captured the turning point in the story, which is the moment in which the unnamed woman bends down to anoint and kiss Jesus' feet. At this point the room fills with tension. The alabaster flask filled with ointment is open and the woman courageously begins to anoint Jesus. Simon is shown gesturing to Jesus, urging him to speak out against the humiliation of allowing a sinner to wash his feet. His parted lips are primed to ask Jesus whether he really knows what he is doing.

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus explains that those who owe a greater debt have greater reason to be grateful than those who owe a smaller one.[48] Alone in the foreground, the penitent woman risks being ridiculed in order to offer the Lord the best that she has. Jesus ignores his host's nervous gesture and instead, reaches towards the woman to offer his gratitude and blessing. If the friars took her example to heart, as Jesus suggested, they would have imitated the care and attention that the woman offers the Lord. Simon's awkward protest conveys the moral of the story: that instead of waiting for Jesus' response to the woman's actions, he presumptuously questions the propriety of the event. From this example of how not to behave as a host, the friars would have learned about discerning the way of the Lord in the midst of many dissenting voices. The panel bears witness to the fact that commotion and confusion are part of community life and to the conviction that florins, like shekels, can be used in ways that honor Christ.

In the panel above the image of the anointing is the story of Benedict being fed by a monk. The accompanying inscription reads: "You prepare delicacies for yourself while my servant is in that place,

[48] Luke 7:47.

tortured with hunger."[49] In this version of Gregory's account, the priest receives the message just before he begins his meal. Meanwhile, Benedict is at prayer in his cold, dark cave. The panel depicts the rich symbol of bread as the focal point of generosity and service, while it also bears witness to the power of prayer through which both figures become aware of the other's presence. Benedict's asceticism calls to mind Christ's own periods of fasting and profound prayer. More importantly, it reminds the friars of their mandate to seek Christ in the poorest places and to care for him wherever he is found. The scene is virtually a literal depiction of Matthew 25:35–6: "For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you comforted me, in prison and you came to visit me."

The panel in the top left-hand corner of the fresco depicts the stigmatization of St. Francis, which, almost immediately after Francis's death became the visual trademark of the Franciscan Order. Despite the fact that this panel depicts a prayerful, mystical encounter, the subject matter complements the Benedict panel. Just as Benedict in his asceticism personified humility for early medievals, Francis personified poverty, chastity and obedience for the later medieval church. Also, Benedict is often described as the founder of western monasticism, while Francis is acclaimed as an architect of the thirteenth century Catholic mendicant movement. This particular depiction of the *Stigmatization of Francis* follows chapter thirteen of Bonaventure's *Legenda maior*. Bonaventure describes the event in this way:

> On a certain morning about the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, while Francis was praying on the mountainside, he saw a Seraph with six fiery and shining wings descend from the height of heaven. And when in swift flight the Seraph had reached a spot in the air near the man of God, there appeared between the wings the figure of a man crucified, with his hands and feet extended in the form of a cross and fastened to a cross. Two of the wings were lifted above his head, two were extended for flight and two covered his whole body. When Francis

[49] "TU TIBI DELITIAS PREPARAS [ET] SERVU[S] MEU[S] IN ILLO LOCO FAME CRUCIATUR." Brackets mine. *Delitias* comes from delit(iscere)(escere), meaning to hide, to conceal. Note that in Gregory's *Dialogues* the priest feeds Benedict when he is told about his hunger. Here, Romanus brings food to Benedict, which, Gregory also says, was his custom. See Book 2, chapter 1.

> saw this, he was overwhelmed and his heart was flooded with a mixture of joy and sorrow. He rejoiced because of the gracious way Christ looked upon him under the appearance of the Seraph, but the fact that he was fastened to a cross pierced his soul with a sword of compassionate sorrow (Luke 2:35).[50]

Just as Mary's heart would be pierced with a sword of sorrow, Francis sought to emulate the closeness between Mother and Son by gratefully accepting the stigmatization. For Bonaventure, Francis models his joyful participation in the Lord's suffering on Jesus' humble embrace of sorrow and death. The burning love that he receives from the fiery seraph enables the *alter Christus* to experience the stigmatization as life-giving. As with the panel of St. Benedict, this scene bears an inscription: "O crucifying seraph, the seats are prepared by the angels for those endowed with a sign."[51]

The wounds created by the luminous beams are real but not exaggerated, and are especially visible in Francis's hands and side. In addition, they match Christ's own injuries wound for wound, such that the beam from Christ's side reaches towards Francis and pierces the *Poverello's* side. The nail prints in the hands and feet of the crucified seraph are indicated by bright red marks, while the nails themselves are missing. This feature underscores the idea that Francis's stigmatization was a different kind of encounter with the crucified Lord than he had had in San Damiano. The novelty here is that this is a crucified seraph. In the *Soul's Journey into God*, Bonaventure interprets Francis's vision as ". . . our father's rapture in contemplation and the road by which this rapture is reached." The road, he explains, is the six levels of illumination by which the soul passes over entirely into God.[52] Thus, the illuminated angel can be seen as reaching out to Francis to show him the way to God through Christ.

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[50] Bonaventure, *The Life of St. Francis*, 13.3, p. 305; *Fontes*, p. 891.

[51] "O CRUCIFER SERAPHYCE SIGNO DOTATE PERTENATIS ANGELICE SINT SEDES PREPARATE" Bonaventure states in his *Life of Francis* that the seat of a fallen angel has been reserved for Francis (p. 234). It is not clear why, in the inscription, *sedes* is plural (*sint preparate*).

[52] Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, prol. 2–3, p. 54; *Itin* (5.295a–b). The stages are contemplation of God 1) In His vestiges in the sense world; 2) Through God's image stamped upon our natural powers; 3) In His image reformed by the gifts of grace; 4) In divine unity through its primary name which is Being; 5) In the most blessed Trinity in its name which is Good; 6) Through spiritual and mystical ecstasy in which the intellect finds rest when through ecstasy our affection passes over entirely into God.

It is appropriate to find this figure bathed in a bright light, for the Hebrew word *seraphim* means (the burning ones.) The seraph's cruciform appearance makes it clear that Francis is meant to focus on Christ himself, who is the principle of illumination (*medium faciens scire*). By visually conflating the images of the seraph and Christ, this painter, and others before him, depicted what Bonaventure verbally articulated in the *Soul's Journey into God*: that people must use the world around them in order to be led in the path of God, that they arrive at God's truth by entering into their own souls, alone, at the mountaintop, where God's image is everlasting and that they pass over into God by contemplating the First Principle.[53]

The last of the five panels depicts the story of Louis of Toulouse feeding the poor and sick of Florence. As the son of King Charles II of Naples and Sicily and grandson of King Stephen V of Hungary, Louis was expected to succeed his father. However, at the age of fourteen, Louis was taken captive by the King of Aragon and held in Barcelona for the next seven years. During that period, he encountered the Franciscan friar, Arnauld de Villeneuve. The relationship led him to a life of prayer and to the study of philosophy and theology. Louis was ordained at the age of twenty-three and shortly thereafter, was consecrated Bishop of Toulouse by Boniface VIII. In the end he was admired for having abdicated the throne and for living the simple life of a friar, even during his brief tenure as a bishop.

The panel dedicated to Louis depicts an event that occurred during a banquet that was held at Santa Croce, probably in the year 1296. While en route from Rome to Toulouse, Louis was invited by the *commune* of Florence to stay at the *palaggio del Podestà*; however, out of humility he chose to stay with his brothers at the friary. There he exercised a boundless love for the poor that is characteristic of many saints who have relinquished personal wealth and power, including Francis.

During his stay at Santa Croce, Louis held a banquet for the sick and poor of Florence. In a selfless act he personally served the guests at table. The feast in the fresco takes place in what is portrayed as a permanent part of the convent that has been offered on this occasion in service to the poor. The friars' openness to company

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[53] Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 1.2, p. 60; *Itin* (5.297a).

(*cum pane*) is conveyed by the fact that there are no doors or other barriers separating the friars from their guests. The painting underscores the historicity of this event by including the front elevation of Santa Croce, as well as the bell tower.[54] By the time the fresco was painted in the mid-fourteenth century, the friars would have associated the visitation by Louis with their mission to the poor and sick of Florence. In the Gospel of John, service to others is what designates a person as a member of the Body of Christ. Here, Louis imitates Christ by living out his mandate in a way that is both active and deeply personal. Its presence here indicates that, for his act of love, Louis' brothers at Santa Croce deemed him worthy of imitation.

Prayer and the Reign of God

As the trademark of the Franciscan community, the image of the stigmatization conveys the message that Francis sought to imitate what Christ willingly endured. Through these external signs, Francis was transformed into a physical symbol of Christ, but also gradually grew into the loving likeness of God through a life of humble service. While signs such as baptism, chrismation, and the acceptance of a religious habit are indicative of a Christian's relationship with God, the bond itself is cultivated through a life of prayer. For Franciscans, the stigmatization is significant for the relationship with Christ that it represents. Taken together, all of the panels indicate that the lived experience of belonging to Christ deepens with one's awareness of tradition, as well as through prayer and loving service to God and neighbor. Both Bonaventure's *Tree of Life* and the refectory painting suggest that a profoundly intimate experience of the Lord begins with a preference for his cross above all worldly desires.[55]

The fact that the fresco is in a refectory renders a different effect than it would if it had been made for a private room or even a church or chapel. The Last Supper panel reinforces the concept of communal prayer under the Tree of Life. It reminds the friars that, when believers gather in the name of Jesus, meals can facilitate the

[54] Moisé notes that the *campanile* collapsed in 1524 during a terrible storm. See *Santa Croce di Firenze: Memorie e documenti*, ed. Saturnino Mencherini (Florence, 1929), p. 60.

[55] Bonaventure, *The Tree of Life*, prol. 5, p. 122; *Lig vit* (8.69b).

community's encounter with God, certainly in the form of the Mass, but also through ordinary suppers in which Christ is invited to sit at the head of the table. The narrative of the Anointing, in which Christ forgives a sinner who comes to him during a meal, would have indicated to the friars that they, too, could experience the Lord's welcome while seated in their own refectory.[56] Repeated exposure to this image would have reinforced the idea that, amid the changing shape of personal sin, the friars, like the penitent woman, were always free to return to Christ for forgiveness.

The panels depicting the self-giving generosity of Louis of Toulouse and the priest who learns of Benedict's hunger are spatially and spiritually juxtaposed. While the priest ultimately heeds the angel's call to action by sending Romanus to feed Benedict, in this setting he serves more as an admonition against sloth than as a model of service.

In the central panel, the image of Jesus nailed to a cross, inscribed with Bonaventure's words, serves as encouragement to internalize the meaning of the cross by digesting the words during meals. In a way that is consistent with Bonaventure's description of the "Tree of Life," the fresco depicts the leaves from Ezekiel and Revelation that are described as ". . . a most effective medicine to prevent and cure every kind of sickness."[57] Taking their cue from Bonaventure, the friars seated beneath this image would have brought their heartaches, anxieties, sins and frustrations to the cross-tree, and, like Francis, prayed at Jesus' feet for healing from the things that held them captive. For nourishment they could look to the tree for ". . . the fruit that took its origin from the Virgin's womb and reached its savory maturity on the tree of the cross under the midday heat of the Eternal Sun, that is, the love of Christ."[58] Throughout the transformation process, the habit of prayer would have been essential for a successful ministry. As the author of the *Mystical Vine* says, the fruits of a virtuous life must be cultivated over time and harvested frequently.[59]

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[56] Timothy Verdon, "Il significato religioso delle pitture nei refettori" in *La Tradizione Fiorentina dei Cenacoli*, ed. Cristina Acidini Luchinat (Florence, 1997), p. 37.

[57] Bonaventure, *The Tree of Life*, prol. 3, p. 120; *Lig vit* (5.69a); Ez. 47:12 and Rev. 22:2.

[58] Bonaventure, *The Tree of Life*, prol. 3, p. 121; *Lig vit* (5.69a).

[59] In the *Mystical Vine*, Christ is referred to as the "Rose of Charity." The author notes that he is to be discovered gradually, though love for the beloved, which is a life-long process. He writes: "We must discover *who* this lover is, *why* he loves, the *quality* and *extent* of his love." *The Mystical Vine: A Treatise on the Passion of Our Lord*. Translated by a friar of S.S.F. (London, 1955), p. 51.

In teaching the newly baptized about how to approach the Eucharist, St. Augustine instructed the faithful to "Be what you see and receive what you are."[60] Through the fruits of prayer, as believers receive what they are, they become more and more what they have received. For Christians, individual and communal realities are transformed by the act of putting on, taking in and living out, Christ. The various panels in this Franciscan depiction of the *Tree of Life* work together to teach the viewer that Christian life, including faith, ministry and ultimately, identity, begin with a preference for Jesus' cross above all worldly desires. In the context of the friary, this monumental fresco functions as a template for prayer. Preaching, right relations, and loving service are several of the fruits of a life lived in the shadow of this Tree of Life.

Conclusion

As Mary Carruthers writes, "Literary works become institutions as they weave a community together by providing it with shared experience and a certain kind of language, the language of stories that can be experienced over and over again through time and as occasion suggests."[61] According to Bonaventure, through Christ, the friars are invited to ". . . explore his secrets . . ."[62] and ". . . learn to have recourse to him in every crisis of temptation."[63] At Santa Croce the friars honor Bonaventure's book by integrating it into their theological diorama. In the refectory setting, the table of contents is presented in conjunction with images of apostolic life from various times and places. Individually the panels remind the friars that humility, service and love have always been the foundation of fidelity to the Gospel story. Together, these images of Christian life in various eras invite the friars to celebrate their Christian faith by continuing the work begun by their spiritual forebears. Christ is the focal point of the story, while the branches of the "Tree of Life" offer assistance in 'reading' the mystery of selfless love.

The leaves of the "Tree of Life", like sacraments, are for the healing of the nations. The refectory's mission statement would have

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[60] St. Augustine, *Sermon 272 for Pentecost, PL* 38 1246–1248.
[61] Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, p. 12.
[62] Bonaventure, *The Tree of Life*, 3.9, p. 133; *Lig vit* (5.73a).
[63] Bonaventure, *The Tree of Life*, 3.10, p. 134; *Lig vit* (5.73b).

taught the friars to dispense them through preaching and pastoral care so that all who eat of the "Tree of Life" may bear abundant fruit. Since it is impossible to be a witness to something with which one is unfamiliar, the friars' own spiritual health would have been essential for fostering an effective ministry. Through prayer, the virtues of the life of Christ would have gradually transformed the friars from images of God into divine similitudes. This monumental painting establishes a tangible, meaningful context through which to interpret Jesus' ministry: "Having completed its journey, the soul contemplates the 'expressive image' of the invisible God in Jesus Christ, where the first and the last, the circumference and the center, alpha and omega, the creator and his creature, are joined together.[64] In the *Tree of Life*, Bonaventure illustrates how the soul that reaches the top of the tree is united with Jesus. All activities, whether affective, intellectual or moral, are stages of the journey towards mystical ecstasy.[65] This side of death, Bonaventure's "Tree of Life" clearly illustrates the principle that (*quia*) life in Christ is to be abundantly fruitful. The pictorial mission statement at Santa Croce illustrates precisely how (*propter quid*) the friars are to honor, cling to and imitate the life that was freely given on the cross.

[64] Alain Besançon, "Pax Romana of the Image" in *The Forbidden Image: An Intellectual History of Iconoclasm* (Chicago, 2000), p. 157.

[65] Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 7, pp. 110–116; *Itin* (7.312a–313b).

BYZANTINE ICONS, FRANCISCAN PRAYER: IMAGES OF INTERCESSION AND ASCENT IN THE UPPER CHURCH OF SAN FRANCESCO, ASSISI

Amy Neff

The *Deesis* vault has justly been called the key and culmination of the entire conceptual program of the Upper Church of San Francesco at Assisi (Figs. 1, 3, 4).[1] Its significance is indeed manifold. In a program whose purpose is to present the entire salvation history of mankind and the mission of the Franciscan order within that history, the *Deesis* is an image of the celestial Christ, accompanied by a hierarchy of saints and angels. On its golden vault, the *Deesis* suggests the transcendent Church Triumphant, the heavenly counterpart of the Church Militant, which is represented on earth by the physical church of San Francesco itself. In the *Deesis*, Francis, titular saint of the Basilica, is raised to glory, joining John the Baptist and the Virgin Mary as primary advocates for mankind. And, seen in conjunction with the vaults at the west and east ends of the nave, painted with the Evangelists and Doctors of the Church, the central *Deesis* pictures Christ as the divine source of the church's wisdom and teaching (Fig. 3).[2] Yet, while all of these concepts have validity, our understanding of the *Deesis* can be still further enriched by considering the key position of the image within a physical space devoted to prayer.

Although the Upper Church is visually dense, covered with pictorial imagery on practically every surface, the space is nevertheless dominated by focal images of Christ. The transcendent Christ of the

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[1] Hans Belting, *Die Oberkirche von S. Francesco in Assisi. Ihre Dekoration als Aufgabe und die Genese einer neuen Wandmalerei* (Berlin, 1977), pp. 73–74, 78; Beat Brenk, "Zu den Gewölbefresken der Oberkirche in Assisi," in *Roma anno 1300*, ed. Angiola Maria Romanini (Rome, 1982), pp. 221–228; Peter Burkhart, *Franziskus und die Vollendung der Kirche im siebten Zeitalter: Zum Programm der Langhausfresken in der Oberkirche von San Francesco in Assisi* (Frankfurt, 1992), pp. 30–33, 190–195; Elvio Lunghi, *The Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi* (New York, 1996), pp. 56–57; and idem, "Le chiese francescane di Assisi nell'anno 1300," in *Assisi anno 1300*, eds. Stefano Brufani and Enrico Menestò (Assisi, 2002), pp. 348–349.

[2] Belting, *Die Oberkirche*, p. 78; Burkhart, *Franziskus*, pp. 193–195.

Deesis is placed in the third of the church's five square bays, its importance evident from its commanding, central position (Figs. 2, 3). Its visual prominence was matched in the thirteenth century by that of three other large images (only two of which survive), each depicting Christ on the cross and each associated with one of the Basilica's three altars (Figs. 2, 8, 9, 11). The significance of the *Deesis* in San Francesco can be explored through its relationship to these images of the crucified Christ, considering issues of architectural space, Franciscan theology, and Byzantine artistic models.

For the primary images of Christ at Assisi—the *Deesis* and Christ on the cross—were adapted from Byzantine art, a fact that is often noted but which still raises fundamental questions about the Franciscans' appreciation, understanding, and refashioning of models imported from the east. A short essay cannot survey the full extent and significance of Byzantine art at Assisi, but, through analysis of Assisi's primary images of Christ, I will suggest that the designers and artists of the Upper Church skillfully manipulated images taken from Byzantine iconography in order to enhance a worship-space that in many respects was unprecedented: the first monumental church built for the Franciscans and the "head" and "mother-church" of a new religious order.[3] Even though the architecture and decoration of San Francesco were firmly rooted in western, especially Roman, traditions, by coordinating the placement of the *Deesis* with images of Christ on the cross, the designers of the Upper Church created something new. "Imported" Byzantine images of Christ effectively modify the dynamics of the western, basilican architectural space in a way that alters the meaning of the Byzantine image and subtly, yet clearly, suggests the dynamics of Bonaventure's theology of prayer and salvation. The result is a Franciscan sacred space, expressive of Franciscan theology, and fostering Franciscan prayer.

My analysis follows the lead of others who have interpreted the decoration of the Upper Church in relationship to theology. My perspective, however, is somewhat different, asking how the dominating, Byzantine-inspired images of Christ might have enhanced the

[3] According to Gregory IX's bull of 1230, *Is qui Ecclesiam*, the Basilica was to serve the Order as "*caput et mater*." For the significance of this phrase, which implicitly compares San Francesco to the Lateran church in Rome, see Belting, *Die Oberkirche*, pp. 24–25, who stresses the innovative character of San Francesco's architecture and decoration, pp. 9–29.

architectural spaces of the Upper Church as sites of Franciscan prayer.[4] My focus is not on the liturgy per se but on prayer as Bonaventure, drawing on John of Damascus, often defined it, the ascent of the intellect into God.[5] Although in its narrow sense, this classic definition concerns mental or contemplative prayer, the liturgical prayer of offices and sacraments has the same goal.

Images of Descent: Christ on the Cross

The frescoes of the Upper Church were most likely completed by ca. 1296.[6] Well before this date, in 1236, Giunta Pisano had painted the monumental crucifix that was mounted atop the rood-beam separating the nave from the sanctuary.[7] The huge, elevated cross stood on axis with Christ of the *Deesis* and with the main altar. Although Giunta's cross has not survived, its central position and commanding size can be imagined from a photograph of the large, plain cross set up by Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle when restoring the Upper Church in the 1870s (Fig. 11).[8] Other, smaller crosses are reliable witnesses to Giunta's style and iconography. For example, the slightly later cross that Giunta painted for another Franciscan church in

[4] For another approach to the issue of Franciscan architectural and representational space, see Timothy J. Johnson, "Into the Light: Bonaventure's Minor Life of Saint Francis and the Franciscan Production of Space," in *Francis of Assisi: History, Hagiography and Hermeneutics in the Early Documents*, ed. Jay M. Hammond (Hyde Park, 2004), pp. 229–249.

[5] Timothy J. Johnson, *The Soul in Ascent: Bonaventure on Poverty, Prayer, and Union with God* (Quincy, 2000), pp. 100, 126, 141–142, 152.

[6] In contrast to several scholars' hypotheses of completion in the early 14th century; see Lunghi, "Le chiese," p. 353; Donal Cooper and Janet Robson, "Pope Nicholas IV and the Upper Church at Assisi," *Apollo* 157 (2003), pp. 31–35. See, however, the recent argument for a later date of completion in Thomas de Wesselow, "The Date of the St. Francis Cycle in the Upper Church of S. Francesco at Assisi: The Evidence of Copies and Considerations of Method," in *The Art of the Franciscan Order in Italy*, ed. William R. Cook (Leiden, 2005), pp. 113–167.

[7] On Giunta's cross for San Francesco, see Angelo Tartuferi, *Giunta Pisano* (Soncino, 1991), pp. 13–16, 38; Elvio Lunghi, *Il Crocefisso di Giunta Pisano e l'Icona del "Maestro di San Francesco" alla Porziuncula* (Santa Maria degli Angeli, 1995), pp. 55–59; Donal Cooper, *In medio ecclesiae: screens, crucifixes and shrines in the Franciscan Church interior in Italy (c. 1230–c. 1400)*, 2 vols., (Ph.D. diss., Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 2000), 1, pp. 108–116; Servus Gieben, "La Croce con Frate Elia di Giunta Pisano," in *Il cantiere pittorico della Basilica Superiore di San Francesco in Assisi*, eds. Giuseppe Basile and Pasquale Magro (Assisi, 2001), pp. 101–110.

[8] Cooper, *In medio ecclesiae*, 1, p. 110 n. 19, dates this photograph between 1873 and 1892. Cavalcaselle's cross measured about six meters in height.

Assisi displays a grace and pathos that would not have been diminished by monumental scale (Fig. 13).[9]

It is well known that with his two Assisi crosses, at San Francesco and at Santa Maria degli Angeli (the Porziuncula), Giunta Pisano introduced into a Franciscan milieu an iconography significantly different from that prevalent in early thirteenth-century Italian art. Instead of showing Christ alive, triumphant, and upright, as, for example, on the cross of San Damiano (Fig. 12), Giunta followed the Byzantine iconography of Christ dead on the cross, the type adapted in Italy as the *Christus patiens*.[10] Christ's head rests on his shoulder; his closed eyes, strained face, and slightly curving body gently suggest suffering and submission to human death. Scholars differ in their assessment of Giunta's originality, since other crosses with elements of the *patiens* iconography are contemporary or somewhat earlier than that in San Francesco; nevertheless, Giunta's cross had pivotal importance.[11] Displayed in San Francesco, carrying the authoritative prestige of the mother-church of the order, it became the archetypal model for numerous crosses in Italian churches. Although adopted by other religious groups, most notably the Dominicans, the *patiens* remained quintessentially Franciscan imagery until the end of the thirteenth century, commissioned for Franciscan churches far more often than for any other setting, as Donal Cooper has documented.[12]

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[9] On the Porziuncula cross, see Tartuferi, *Giunta*, pp. 13–16, 38–45; Lunghi, *Il Crocefisso*, pp. 22–63; Cooper, *In medio ecclesiae*, 1, pp. 110–111.

[10] The historiography of the term as used by art historians merits research. For the *patiens* in Italian art, see esp. Klaus Krüger, *Der frühe Bildkult des Franziskus in Italien: Gestalt- und Funktionswandel des Tafelbildes im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1992), pp. 149–172; Michele Bacci, *"Pro remedio animae." Immagini sacre e pratiche devozionali in Italia centrale (secoli XIII e XIV)* (Pisa, 2000), pp. 108–113; Cooper, *In medio ecclesiae*; Joanna Cannon, "Giotto and Art for the Friars: Revolutions Spiritual and Artistic," in *The Cambridge Companion to Giotto*, eds. Anne Derbes and Mark Sandona (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 108–112; and Gian Paolo Violi, "Sull'iconografia del *Christus patiens*," in *Cimabue a Pisa: la pittura pisana del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto* (Exh. cat., Pisa, 2005), pp. 275–279.

[11] See, for example, Lunghi, *Il Crocefisso*, pp. 50–51.

[12] Cooper, *In medio ecclesiae*, 1, pp. 116–120 and Appendix A; also Cannon, "Giotto and Art for the Friars," pp. 110–112. The dating of Giunta's cross made for the Dominicans of Bologna is controversial. While some scholars date it before Giunta's Franciscan crosses, the indisputable prevalence of the *patiens* type within the Franciscan order makes it more likely that the type originated with the Franciscans and was later appropriated for the cross at San Domenico, Bologna, as argued by Luciano Bellosi, in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica with Stefano Tumidei (Exh. cat., Bologna, 2000), cat. 52; and Joanna Cannon, "The

The lasting influence of Giunta's cross is evident in Cimabue's two huge frescoes of the *Crucifixion*, which rise behind the altars placed on the east wall of each arm of the transept (Figs. 2, 8, 9). In the sanctuary, Cimabue's two enormous frescoes would have served as focal points for the clergy—friars and, if present, the pope and his retinue—seated in choir stalls at the west end of the church, while Giunta's great crucifix would have dominated the congregational space of the nave.[13] Cimabue's paintings, which can be dated ca. 1275–79, build on Giunta's precedent, incorporating the *patiens* into narrative scenes of high drama (Fig. 9).[14] Cimabue adds to the traditional iconography of the Crucifixion a full cast of awestruck spectators, sorrowful companions, and frantically grieving angels. He increases the painful tension of the figure on the cross by exaggerating the body's curvature and the sharp angularity of its loin-cloth swept to the side, as if blown by a sudden gust of wind. Christ's deeply sunken head accentuates his dead weight. Under Cimabue, the pathos of Giunta's cross becomes heroic tragedy. Still, both Giunta's and Cimabue's images owe their impact to a Byzantine iconography that depicts the suffering of human death rather than a symbolic allegory of victory, a radical shift in emphasis.

Giunta's San Francesco cross was commissioned by Brother Elias, Minister General of the order from 1232 to 1239, and most likely it was Elias who chose its Byzantine iconography. Having spent three years setting up a Franciscan province in the Holy Land (1217–20), Elias would have had ample opportunity to see an iconography that

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era of the great painted crucifix: Giotto, Cimabue, Giunta Pisano, and their anonymous contemporaries," *Renaissance Studies* 16 (2002), pp. 577–578.

[13] This essay follows Donal Cooper's reconstruction of choir stalls, rood-beam, and cross; "Franciscan Choir Enclosures and the Function of Double-Sided Altarpieces in pre-Tridentine Umbria," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 64 (2001), pp. 32–39. For a different reconstruction, see Irene Hueck, "La Basilica Superiore come luogo liturgico: l'arredo e il programma della decorazione," in *Il cantiere pittorico della Basilica Superiore di San Francesco in Assisi*, pp. 43–69. This separation of clergy and laity indicates the principal viewers of each image during mass and office; it does not mean that laity were never in the sanctuary or that friars were never in the nave.

[14] For Cimabue's *Crucifixion* frescoes, see Irene Hueck, "Cimabue und das Bildprogramm der Oberkirche von San Francesco in Assisi," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 25 (1981), pp. 311–314; Belting, *Oberkirche*, pp. 15, 131–132, 206–207; Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, trans. A. Bonfante-Warren et al. (New York, 1998), pp. 167, 181–184, 221–222, 280; Serena Romano, "La doppia Crocifissione e il programma 'nascosto' di Cimabue," in *La basilica di San Francesco ad Assisi. Pittori, botteghe, strategie narrative* (Rome, 2001), pp. 77–100.

had developed from as early as the eighth century in Byzantium.[15] It is entirely possible that the artist, Giunta Pisano, was also familiar with Byzantine crucifixion imagery, perhaps by means of a Byzantine or Crusader image imported to Italy, or, as Luciano Bellosi has speculated, through travel in the east.[16] The initial choice, however, of artist and probably also iconography would have been Elias's. Giunta then would have had the challenge of applying Byzantine iconography to a distinctively Italian form of art, unknown in Byzantium, the large-scale, painted rood-beam cross.[17] In response to his patron's wishes, Giunta would have also added another western element, the figure of Elias, kneeling at Christ's feet.[18]

The full explanation for Elias's choice eludes the historian, but surely one reason was to stimulate compassionate prayer.[19] To be sure, according to his hagiographers, Saint Francis had been moved to tearful compassion, "the wounds of the sacred Passion . . . impressed deep in his heart," after his encounter with the cross of San Damiano, an image of Christ triumphant and living, not dead on the cross (Fig. 12).[20] But not everyone had Francis's sensitivity or imagination. An explicit visualization of Christ's death might touch the hearts of viewers more readily than a figure whose imperviousness to suffering

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[15] The depiction of Christ dead on the cross is known in Byzantine art as early as the 8th century; the swayed pose and tilted head appear by ca. 1100. For the development and theological context of the image in Byzantium, see Anna D. Kartsonis, *Anastasis: The Making of an Image* (Princeton, 1986), pp. 40–68; Kathleen Corrigan, "Text and Image on an Icon of the Crucifixion at Mount Sinai," *The Sacred Image East and West*, eds. Robert Ousterhout and Leslie Brubaker (Urbana, 1995), pp. 45–62.

[16] Bellosi, *Cimabue*, p. 60; idem, *Duecento*, p. 206. Such a trip is purely speculative but not impossible. Alternatively, Byzantine models might have been available to Giunta in Pisa. Pisan crosses dating possibly as early as ca. 1210 already include elements of the new Byzantine iconography; see *Cimabue a Pisa*, cat. 7. Elvio Lunghi notes that the choice of the Byzantine *Christus patiens* can also be seen as part of a broad, transeuropean movement, promoted by the Cistercians, toward increasingly affective Christian imagery; *Il Crocefisso*, pp. 53–54; and idem, "Francis of Assisi in Prayer before the Crucifix in the Accounts of the First Biographers," in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt (New Haven, 2002), pp. 346, 352 n. 21.

[17] See Krüger, *Der frühe Bildkult*, pp. 162–163.

[18] Lunghi, "*Il Crocefisso*," pp. 56–57; Gieben (as in n. 7); Cooper, *In medio ecclesiae*, pp. 111–114.

[19] For the style and emotional effect of dugento mendicant crosses, see esp. Cannon, "Giotto and Art for the Friars;" and Salvatore Settis, *History of Italian Art*, 2, trans. Claire Dorey (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 167–178.

[20] For the miracle and Francis's weeping, see *2 C* 10, *FAED* 2, pp. 249–250; *Fontes*, pp. 452–453. The quote is from *FAED* 2, p. 249.

would seem to disassociate him from the human condition.[21] Empathy with a shared experience of suffering might help Christians feel a deep, personal connection to their deity; and by ca. 1240, Franciscan legends emphasize bitterness, sorrow, and tears as essential components of prayer.[22] For example, Thomas of Celano's *Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul* (the second Life of Saint Francis), written 1245–1247, devotes several chapters to descriptions of how Francis prayed:

> He would fill the forest with groans, water the places with tears, strike his breast with his hand. . . . In order to make all the marrow of his heart a holocaust . . ., he would place *before his eyes the One who is manifold and supremely simple*.[23]

This text continues with a description of Francis's ultimate attainment of the sweetness of ecstasy. Sorrow, tears, and sacrifice are not the goal of prayer. Tearful repentance and response to the passion, however, mark the path in prayer. The role of the visual arts in stimulating this response is well documented in Franciscan sources, most notably in the writings of Angela of Foligno (d. 1309). Images of the passion made her tremble with fever; gazing at Christ's wounds filled her with guilt and sorrow; the pain of seeing a crucifix led to her feeling embraced by Christ's love.[24]

Other factors were surely influential as well. Liturgically, in its depiction of humanity rather than transcendent divinity, the *Christus patiens* placed near the altar gives visual emphasis to the doctrine of Christ's bodily sacrifice and presence in the bread and wine of the mass—a central concern in twelfth- and thirteenth-century theology.[25]

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[21] Richard Viladesau, *The Beauty of the Cross: The Passion of Christ in Theology and the Arts, from the Catacombs to the Eve of the Renaissance* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 87–89, 110–115, emphasizes the theological and emotional humanism of the *Christus patiens*, with special reference to Franciscan devotion, pp. 105–110.

[22] See, for example, the account of the miracle at San Damiano in *L3C* 14; *FAED* 2, p. 76; *Fontes*, p. 1386. Still, in this text, as in *1C* 94; *FAED* 1, pp. 263–264; *Fontes*, p. 369, the Stigmatization is described as an occasion of love, sweetness, and joy, as well as sorrow.

[23] *2C* 95, *FAED* 2, pp. 309–310; *Fontes*, pp. 530–531, The section in italics quotes Ps 66:25, Ps 101:3, and Wis 7:22.

[24] See *Angela of Foligno. Complete Works*, trans. Paul Lachance (New York, 1993), pp. 102–104, 127, 131, 175. For the works of art Angela might have seen and her responses, see also Elvio Lunghi, *La Passione degli Umbri. Crocifissi di legno in Valle Umbra tra Medioevo e Rinascimento* (Spello, 2000), pp. 13–38.

[25] Cannon, "Giotto," p. 108; and Donal Cooper, "Projecting Presence: The Monumental Cross in the Italian Church Interior," in *Presence: The Inherence of the Prototype within the Image and Other Objects*, eds. Robert Maniura and Rupert Shephard

Moreover, Elias and his contemporaries may have considered the image of *Christus patiens* uniquely authentic and *true*, in that it originated in Byzantium and the Holy Land.[26] Coming from the east, seemingly closer to the traditions of the early church, Byzantine icons often seemed credible replicas of sacred models. This privileging of "authentic" Byzantine forms corresponds to a certain knowledge and acceptance of Orthodox icon theory among the Franciscans, seen, for example, in Bonaventure's *Sentence Commentary* of ca. 1250. Here, Bonaventure comments on the defense of icons attributed by Latin authors to John of Damascus: "'The honor paid to the image is referred to the prototype.' It is thus the same to adore the holy image as to adore him who is there depicted."[27] Bonaventure also points to the authenticity of "old" icons, such as those painted by Saint Luke.[28]

Neither Elias nor Giunta Pisano could have foreseen the tremendous success of the type of cross displayed in the Upper Church of San Francesco, Assisi. Nor could anyone in the 1230s have envisioned the position of Giunta's cross within the dense pictorial environment of the completed Upper Church, where the cross's emotive, liturgical, and theological significance is enhanced by its relationship to the late thirteenth-century frescoes. In particular, in conjunction

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(Aldershot, 2006), pp. 47–70, esp. 51–54, 56. See also Viladesau, *The Beauty of the Cross*, p. 88, on the "presence" of Christ's suffering in the *patiens*. Johnson, "Into the Light," p. 235, notes Francis's awed perception of Christ's real presence on the altar, as on the cross. For the liturgical aspects of Giunta's and other Italian figured crosses, see also Michele Bacci, "*Pro remedio animae*," pp. 100–113.

[26] See esp. Cannon, "Giotto and Art for the Friars," p. 108, who develops the idea found in Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago, 1994), pp. 304–305; and Krüger, *Der frühe Bildkult*, pp. 51, 165–167. Another insight into what might have been considered authentic by a 13th-century audience is provided by the friar Salimbene's description of the 13th-century cult called the Apostles. Despite his overall disapproval of the group, Salimbene praises the fact that they appear to "imitate the dress of the Apostles as it has been handed down in the pictorial tradition from Christ's time to our own, in which the Apostles of Nazarus are depicted with long hair and flowing beards with a mantle thrown over their shoulders." Like the text cited by Cannon and Belting, this passage suggests a belief in the reliability of pictures to preserve the true appearance of persons from scripture. For Salimbene's text, dated 1283–1288, see *The Chronicle of Salimbene de Adam*, trans. Joseph L. Baird et al. (Binghamton, N.Y., 1986), p. 292.

[27] *III Sent* d. 9, a. 1, q. 2 (3.202a). Similar quotations of Byzantine icon theory also appear in Alexander of Hales and Thomas Aquinas. For Aquinas's and Bonaventure's justifications of images, see Cannon, "Giotto and Art," p. 124; and Cooper, "Projecting Presence," pp. 49–50.

[28] *III Sent* d. 9, a. 1, q. 2, concl, ad 6 (3.205b).

with the *Deesis* frescoed on the nave vault, the *Christus patiens* at the altar provides an especially effective visualization of Bonaventure's concept of the worshiper's path to salvation. In this, the iconography of Christ *dead* rather than living on the cross is essential.

In comparison to earlier Christian theologies, Bonaventure gives unprecedented emphasis and centrality to Christ's death.[29] Bonaventure positions Christ on the cross as a mediating, unifying, and transcending principal.[30] For Bonaventure, mankind's existence and salvation consist of a dynamic, circular journey of exit and return, through the cross. In creation, all being emanates out from the godhead; in salvation, all returns. Because of human frailty and sin, the journey away from God falls down; the return ascends. In the symbolic circle of existence, complete descent is prerequisite to ascent; and this completion takes place in death on the cross, the point of furthest distance from God. There, Christ unites the highest divinity to the lowest abasement. Humanity "is touched by the cross at the furthest point of its flight away from God. The movement is reversed; the circle of reality is turned back;" the return to God begins.[31]

This Franciscan perspective on the crucifixion complements and gives theological structure to the humanism and affective devotion associated with images of the *Christus patiens*. Surely, Giunta's huge image of Christ's death was valued for its power to arouse the viewer's love and compassion, just as it linked Christ's humanity to his sacrifice, conflating Gospel history and liturgical presence in the mass. However, in the minds and teaching of Franciscans influenced by Bonaventure, the *patiens* would also display the critical turning point in the circle of salvation history. Christ's death, apparent in the closed eyes and bent head of the *patiens*, shows his assumption of the imperfection of the human condition, an abasement that the Franciscan viewer might have also seen in Christ's gently curved body—distinctively

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[29] See Bernard McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism: Men and Women in the New Mysticism (1200–1350)* (New York, 1998), p. 110; Ilia Delio, *Crucified Love: Bonaventure's Mysticism of the Crucified Christ* (Quincy, 1998), pp. 67–70.

[30] On these issues, recent works include Ewert H. Cousins, *Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites* (Chicago, 1978); Zachary Hayes, *The Hidden Center. Spirituality and Speculative Christology in St. Bonaventure* (St Bonaventure, 1992); Delio, *Crucified Love*; and J.A. Wayne Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order in Bonaventure's Theology*, trans., ed., with an appendix by J.M. Hammond (St. Bonaventure, 2001).

[31] Zachary Hayes, trans. and ed., *What Manner of Man: Sermons on Christ by St. Bonaventure* (2nd ed., Chicago, 1989), p. 87.

different from the vertical posture of Christ triumphant. Like many medieval theologians, Bonaventure found great significance in the biblical statement that "God made man upright" (Eccles. 7:30). Adam's uprightness was understood to reflect his original likeness to the Creator.[32] Sinfulness, however, deformed Adam; after the fall, humankind no longer stood upright but bent in misery and turned away from moral and divine rectitude.[33] In his writings on this topic, Bonaventure's language vividly evokes a *curving* away from rectitude: in sin, mankind is *incurvatus* or *recurvus*.[34] On the cross, descending to mankind's condition, Christ becomes most like mankind, who is curved in suffering. While modern viewers often see lyric beauty and gracefulness in the body of the *patiens*, a medieval viewer might have also seen a reminder of Christ's abasement in human misery and acceptance of mankind's sins: "He accepted the deformity of our body."[35]

This abasement, as Bonaventure explains, is necessary: "Christ had to make himself similar to a man in order to make man similar to himself."[36] In this concept, Franciscan affective compassion is again seen to be part of a systematic theology of salvation. Bonaventure writes that the compassionate love stimulated by contemplation of Christ's suffering has transformative power, shaping the lover into the image of the beloved.[37] Through his empathetic suffering and

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[32] For relevant case studies in medieval art, see Penny Howell Jolly, *Made in God's Image? Eve and Adam in the Genesis Mosaics at San Marco, Venice* (Berkeley, 1997), pp. 50, 63, 76; and Thomas Dale, "Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms in the Cloister of St-Michel-de-Cuxa," *Art Bulletin* 83 (2001), 402–436.

[33] See *II Sent* prol (2.3a–6b) and *Itin* 1.7 (5.297b–298a). For an English translation see the *Soul's Journey into God* 1.7 in *Bonaventure. The Soul's Journey into God. The Tree of Life. The Life of St. Francis*, trans. Ewert Cousins (New York, 1978), p. 62.

[34] *Brev* 5.2 (5:253b); *Dominica II Adventus*, Sermo 1 (9.46a).

[35] Bonaventure (attrib.) *The Mystical Vine*, trans. José de Vinck in Mystical *Opuscula* 1 (Paterson, 1960; repr. Quincy, 1997), p. 185. For the Latin text, sometimes considered one of Bonaventure's works, see *Vit myst* (8.179a–b). The relationship between visual images of the cross and the theological paradox of Christ's abasement and glory at the crucifixion is discussed from other perspectives in Jeffrey Hamburger, "To Make Women Weep: Ugly Art as 'Feminine' and the Origin of Modern Aesthetics," *Res* 31 (1997), pp. 9–24; and Sara Lipton, "'The Sweet Lean of His Head': Writing about Looking at the Crucifix in the High Middle Ages," *Speculum* 80 (2005), pp. 1172–1208, esp. 1186–1194.

[36] Bonaventure, *Collations on the Six Days*, trans. José de Vinck (Paterson, 1970), p. 14: *Hex* 1.27 (5.334a).

[37] On Bonaventure's use of this idea, drawn from Hugh of St. Victor, see Hayes, *The Hidden Center*, p. 20; Delio, *Crucified Love*, pp. 28, 98–105.

compassionate love, the worshiper begins to regain mankind's original likeness to God, as similitude to Christ's suffering enjoins similitude to Christ's divinity.[38] Salvation entails conformity to Christ attained through compassion, a process exemplified by Saint Francis: "by the flame of that love, he was totally transformed into Christ."[39]

Thus, the feelings engendered by the sight of Christ's suffering were for the Franciscans not only an emotional response but also a step leading toward conformity to Christ and spiritual ascent. Affective, compassionate response to Christ's death is conjoined with the ascent of the intellect into God.[40] The crucial importance of death as a spiritual transition or Passover is vividly described in the final ecstatic passages of Bonaventure's *Soul's Journey into God*: "Whoever loves this death sees God."[41] "Let us, then, die and enter into darkness. . . . With Christ crucified, let us pass out of this world to the father. . . ."[42] The painted image of Christ in death presents the pivotal turning point that makes spiritual ascent possible, a point that is implicit but given no special emphasis by images of Christ alive and triumphant on the cross.

The Franciscan image of *Christus patiens* displays to the faithful the fullness of Christ's descent to humanity, holding out the promise of ascent, return to God, through love of the crucified. This image dominated the space of worship for both friars and lay congregation. In their understanding of Bonaventure's theology, these were very different audiences. Most, perhaps all, of the laity would not have been familiar with the complexities of Bonaventure's theology. Still, the fundamental idea is not abstruse: ascent and return to God the Creator through Christ's descent and sacrifice. This could have been taught by friars to the unlettered. On Giunta's crucifix, in the nave, it is not certain whether the figure of Brother Elias, kneeling at the foot of the cross, was visible to the late medieval congregation; if it was, the problematic status of Elias in the order's memory precludes any firm hypothesis on how this supplicant figure might have

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[38] Stated explicitly in Bonaventure (attrib.), *The Mystical Vine*, pp. 204–205.

[39] Bonaventure, *Sermon 2 on St. Francis*, in Eric Doyle, ed. and trans., *The Disciple and the Master: St. Bonaventure's Sermons on St. Francis of Assisi* (Chicago, 1983), p. 93; *Sermo 4* (9.589b).

[40] Johnson, *The Soul in Ascent*, pp. 100, 126, 141–142, 152.

[41] Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey*, in *Bonaventure*, trans. Cousins (as in n. 32), p. 116; *Itin* 7.6 (5.313b)

[42] Idem.

been perceived.[43] For friars worshiping in the sanctuary, however, the kneeling figure of Saint Francis in each of Cimabue's two transept frescoes presented a model of prayer, showing the saint's humble devotion and, in the clearly visible stigmata, wounds of the crucifixion, the possibility of transformation into the likeness of Christ, merited through compassion and embrace of Christ in death (Figs. 9, 10).

Intercession and Ascent: The *Deesis*

Although the *Christus patiens* portrays God humbled to the human condition, visual reminders of Christ's triumph and divinity are not absent. A bust-length tondo of the eternal Christ, in the form of the *Pantocrator*, was most probably painted at the top of Giunta's cross, as on the cross from the Porziuncula (Fig. 13).[44] In the sanctuary, the scenes painted above Cimabue's two *Crucifixion* frescoes displayed Christ's divinity in heaven and on earth. In the south transept, in a fresco now lost, Christ was enthroned in heaven with seraphim and cherubim; in the north, Christ at the *Transfiguration* manifests his divinity to the apostles (Figs. 8, 14).[45] The *Transfiguration* might have also seemed a particularly apt illustration of the theme of prayer and spiritual ascent. For Bonaventure, the three apostles who climb Mount Tabor represent three upward paths of prayer, and the Transfiguration prefigures the spiritual transformation of all creation.[46]

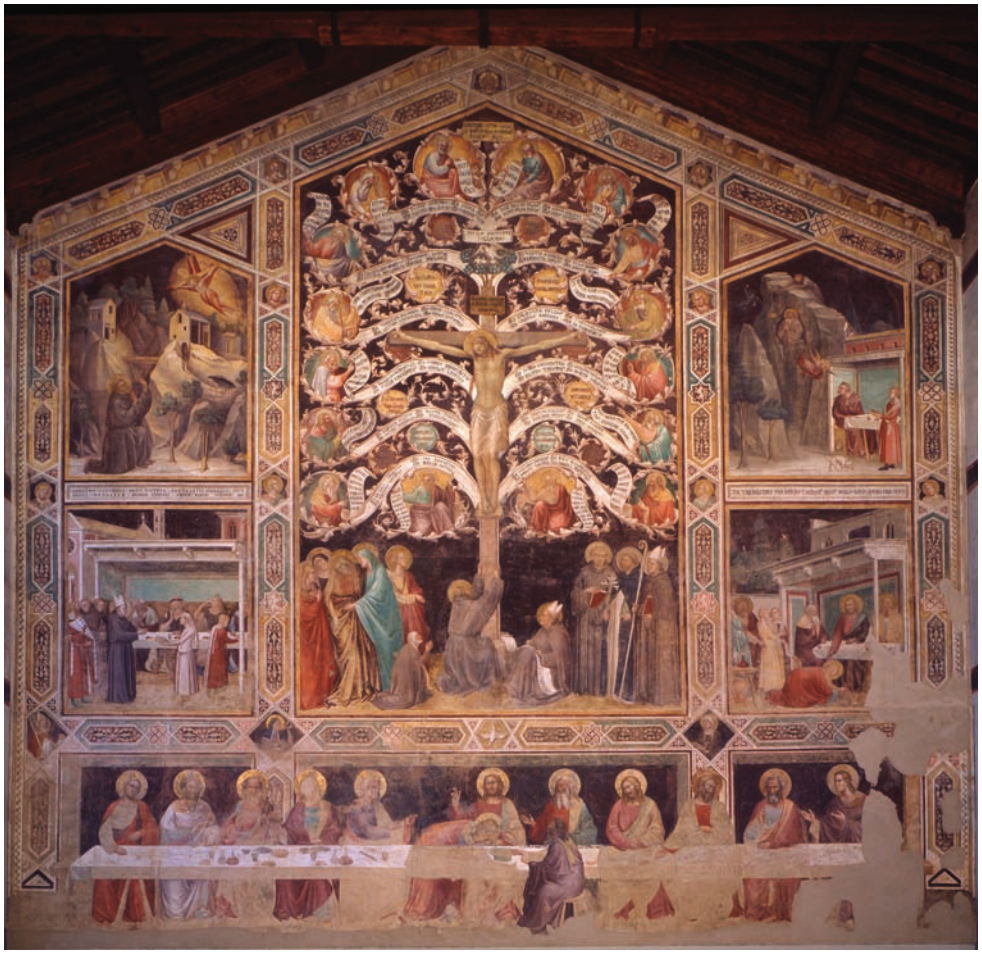
But within the architectural space of the Upper Church, the most significant image of Christ's divine nature is the *Deesis*, in which Christ is the Hierarch, the beginning and endpoint of creation's circular path of descent and ascent (Figs. 4–7). Visible to worshipers in the nave and in much of the sanctuary (even if partly obstructed by the large paintings on the rood-beam), the *Deesis* is a compelling

[43] After Elias's disgrace and ouster from the order in 1240, the prominent visibility or remembrance of Elias is problematic.

[44] Tartuferi, *Giunta Pisano*, nos. 2, 4; also, no. 7, attributed to a follower. Another possibility is an abbreviated scenes of Christ's ascension, with a roundel of the Pantocrator above the Virgin orant, seen on some crosses influenced by Giunta's; idem, ns. 12, 15.

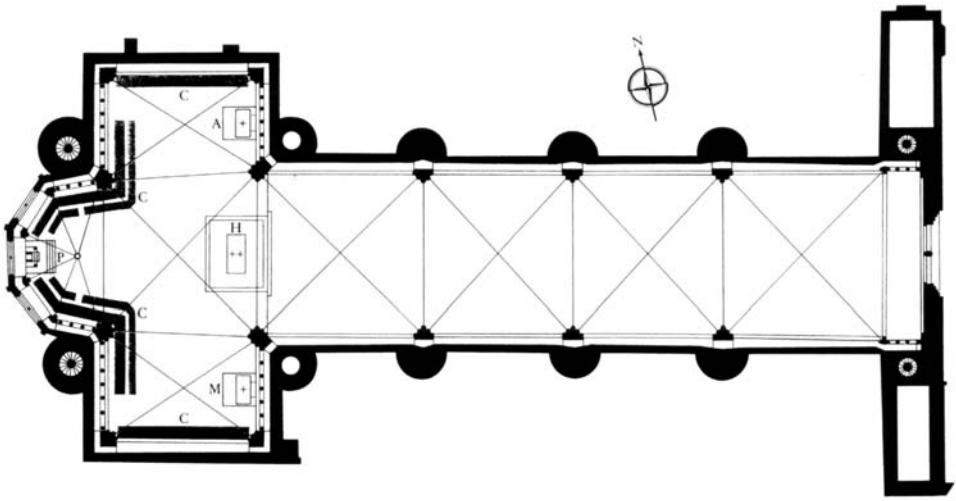
[45] For the identification of the south transept scene, of which only fragments remain, see Hueck, "Cimabue," p. 288, who also notes the contrast between Christ's abasement in the *Crucifixion* and manifested divinity in the transept lunettes, p. 314.

[46] For the Transfiguration in Bonaventure's teaching as a threefold model of prayer, see Johnson, *The Soul in Ascent*, pp. 134–176; and, as a model of ascent, Hayes, *The Hidden Center*, pp. 29–32.



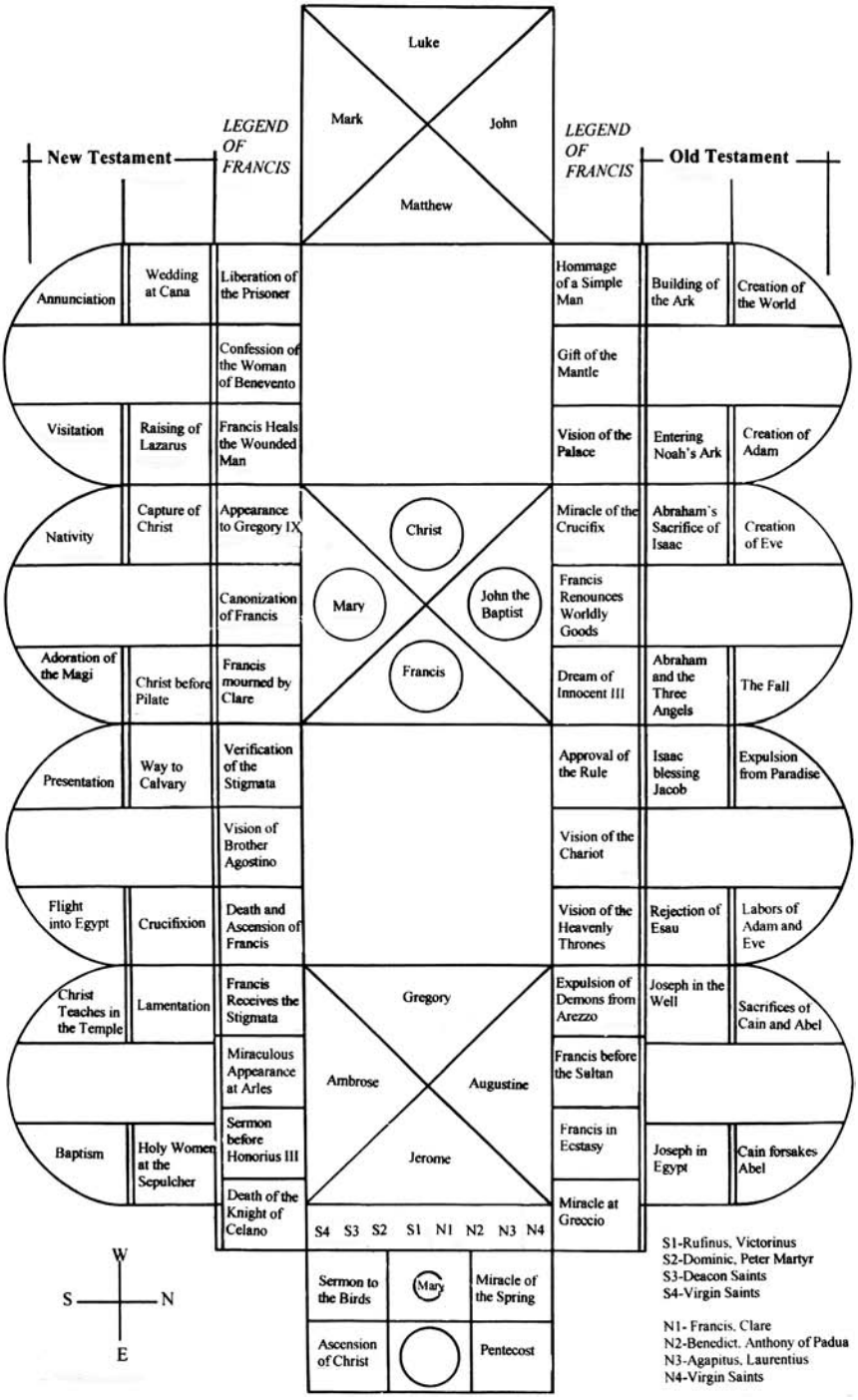
1. Taddeo Gaddi, *Tree of Life*, mid-fourteenth century. Refectory, Santa Croce, Florence. Image courtesy of *Foto Quattrone*.

1. Nave, San Francesco, Assisi, Upper Church. (Photo: © www.assisi.de Stefan Diller)



A Altar of the Holy Apostles (SS. Peter and Paul?)
C Domenico da San Severino's choir (1491–1501)
H High altar
M Altar of St Michael
P Papal throne

2. Plan of San Francesco, Assisi, Upper Church, showing location of choir stalls, altar, and choir screen. (Courtesy of Donal Cooper)



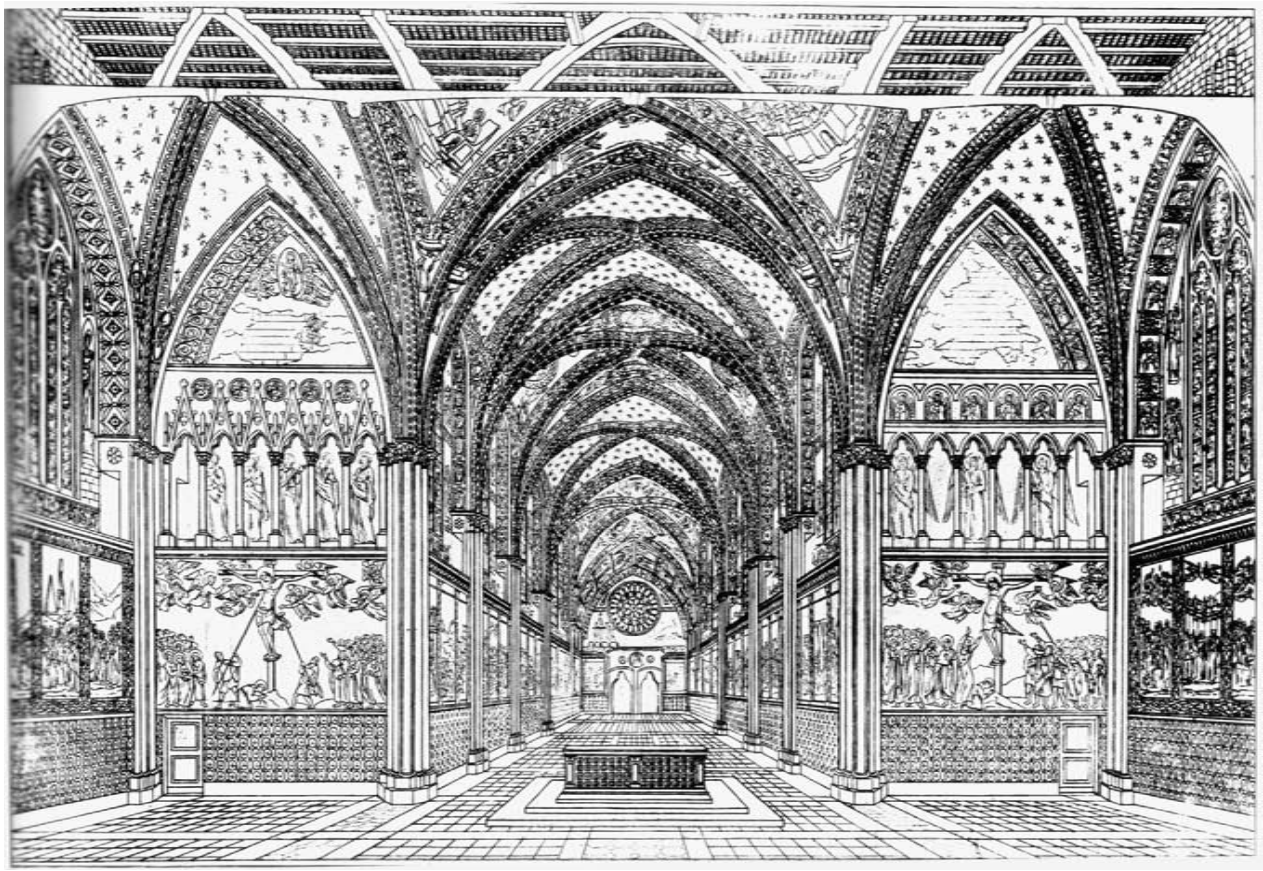
3. Plan of San Francesco, Assisi, Upper Church, showing location of frescoes. (Adapted from Gerhard Ruf, *S. Francesco e S. Bonaventura*)

4. Jacopo Torriti, *Deesis* vault. San Francesco, Assisi, Upper Church, nave.
(Photo: © www.assisi.de Stefan Diller)

5. Jacopo Torriti, *Christ*, detail from *Deesis* vault. (Photo: © www.assisi.de Stefan Diller)

6. Jacopo Torriti, *Virgin Mary*, detail from *Deesis* vault. (Photo: © www.assisi.de Stefan Diller)

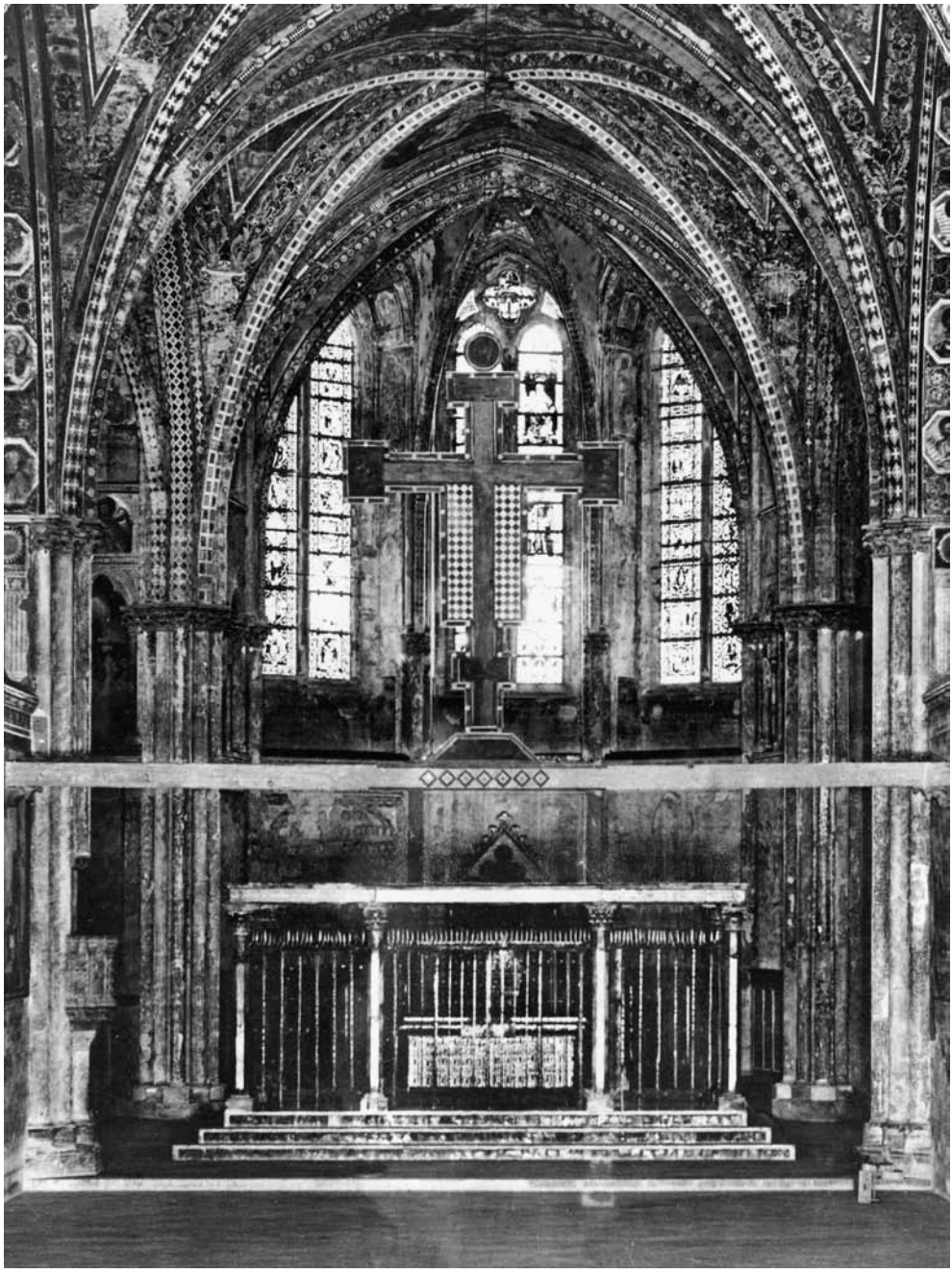
7. Jacopo Torriti, *Saint Francis*, detail from *Deesis* vault. (Photo: © www.assisi.de Stefan Diller)



8. East wall of transept, San Francesco, Assisi, Upper Church. (after B. Kleinschmidt, *Die Basilika S. Francesco in Assisi*, Berlin, 1915)

9. Cimabue, *Crucifixion*. San Francesco, Assisi, Upper Church, east wall of south transept.
(Photo: © www.assisi.de Stefan Diller)

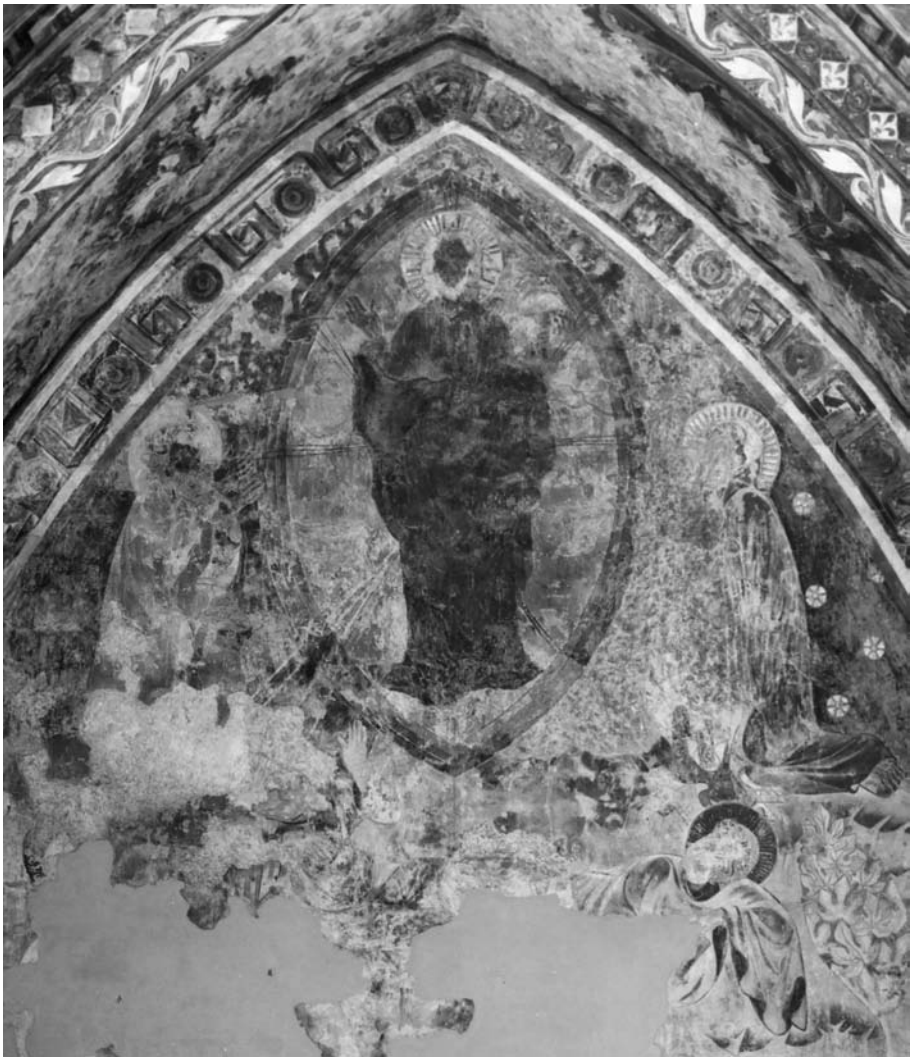
10. Cimabue, *Saint Francis at the foot of the cross*, detail from *Crucifixion*.
(Photo: © www.assisi.de Stefan Diller)



11. View into the sanctuary, San Francesco, Assisi, Upper Church, photograph of ca. 1870, with reconstructed rood-beam and cross.

12. *Cross of San Damiano.* Santa Chiara, Assisi. (Photo: © www.assisi.de Stefan Diller)

13. Giunta Pisano, painted cross. Museo di Santa Maria degli Angeli, Assisi.
(Photo: © www.assisi.de Stefan Diller)



14. *Transfiguration.* San Francesco, Assisi, Upper Church, east wall of north transept. (Photo: Kunsthistorisches Institut Florenz)

15. *Creation.* San Francesco, Assisi, Upper Church, north wall of nave.
(Photo: © www.assisi.de Stefan Diller)

16. *Francis's Renunciation of Worldly Goods.* San Francesco, Assisi, Upper Church, north wall of nave. (Photo: Kunsthistorisches Institut Florenz)

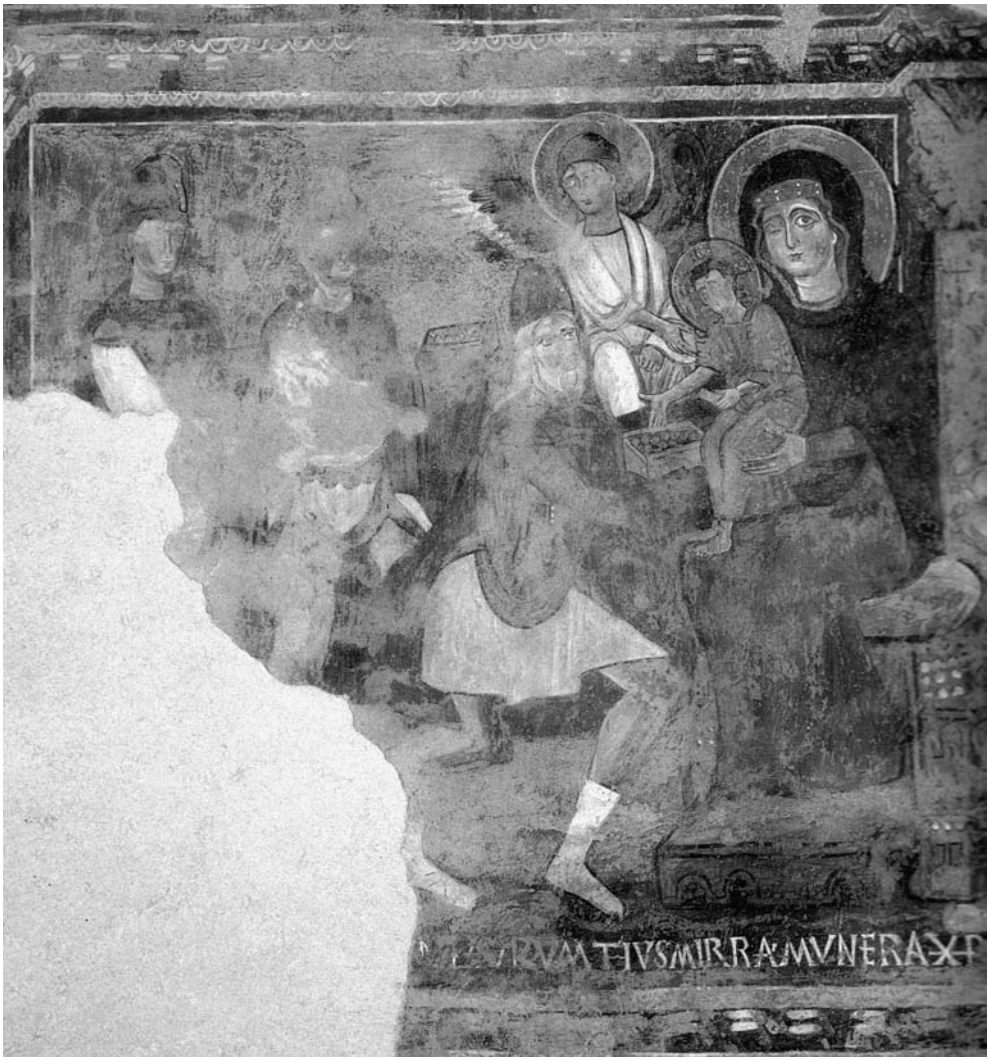
17. *Canonization of Saint Francis.* San Francesco, Assisi, Upper Church, south wall of nave. (Photo: Archivio Fotografico, Sacro Convento, Assisi)

18. *Wedding at Cana.* San Francesco, Assisi, Upper Church, south wall of nave. (Photo: © www.assisi.de Stefan Diller)

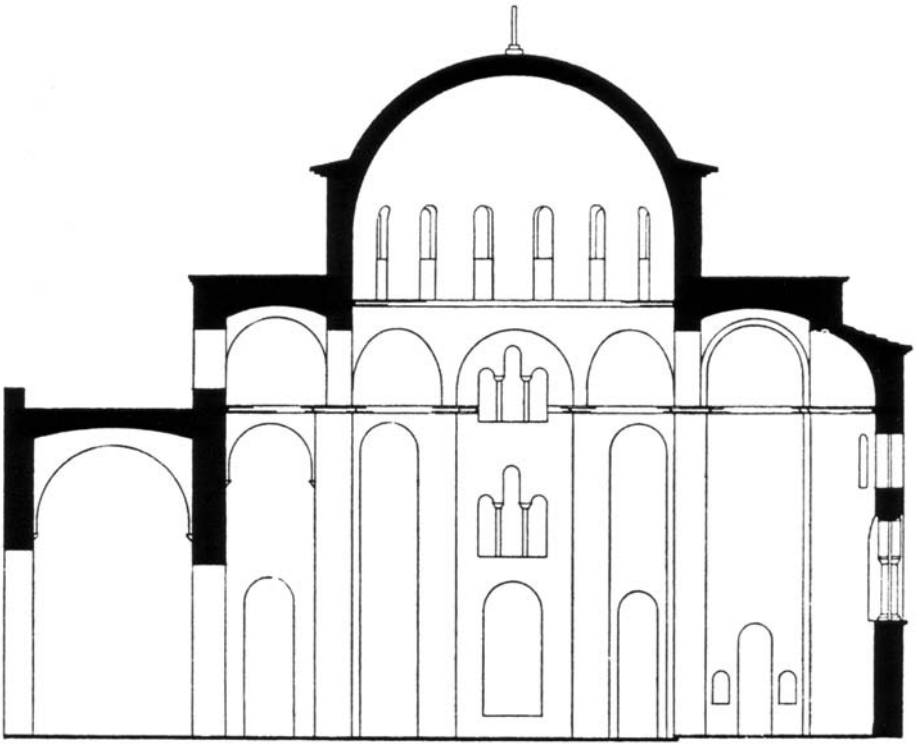
19. *Virgin Mary*, detail of Fig. 18: *Wedding at Cana.*
(Photo: Archivio Fotografico, Sacro Convento, Assisi)

20. *Madonna Tempuli* (Madonna of San Sisto). Santa Maria del Rosario, Monte Mario, Rome. (after *Mother of God: Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. M. Vassilaki, Athens, 2000)

21. *Madonna Advocata.* Santa Maria in Aracoeli, Rome. (Photo: Scala/Art Resource, NY)



22. *Adoration of the Magi*. San Pietro in Valle, Ferentillo (Umbria), nave. (Photo: Marcello Fideli, courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, Istituto Centrale per il Restauro: Archivio fotografico)



23. Monastery Church at Daphni, Athens. Longitudinal section. (after R. W. Schultz and S. H. Barnsley, *The Monastery of Saint Luke of Stiris*, London, 1901)

24. *Pantocrator.* Monastery Church at Daphni, Athens, dome over naos. (Photo: courtesy of Robert Ousterhout)

counterbalance to the *patiens*. Christ on the gilded canopy of the vault is ascendant, unwounded, and labeled King of Glory, his supremacy affirmed by the Virgin, John the Baptist, and Francis. On a lower level, angels hold scepters and orbs, regalia of dominion.

Like the *Christus patiens*, the *Deesis* vault is patterned on Byzantine iconography, reformulating the fundamental Byzantine image of prayer and intercession.[47] The vault was painted ca. 1290 by Jacopo Torriti, who had replaced Cimabue as lead painter in the Upper Church.[48] Torriti's composition arranges the *Deesis* in a very unusual way, with each figure framed in a circle and placed in a separate quadrant of the cross-vault, but, as Hans Belting has demonstrated, this format was probably derived from a Byzantine model similar to the early eleventh-century narthex mosaic at Hosios Loukas, near Stiris.[49] Even the distinctively Byzantine medium of mosaic is imitated at Assisi. The yellow ochre painted inside and around the medallions was originally gilded, highlighting the transcendent nature of this vault, which is set off from darker, star-studded blue vaults to the east and west, probably representing the firmament, the boundary between earth and heaven.[50]

In essence, the meaning of the Assisi vault is consistent with that of the typical *Deesis*, in which Mary and John the Baptist, often with angels, affirm Christ's hierarchical supremacy and pray in intercession for mankind. Assisi's addition of Saint Francis to the basic triad

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[47] On the meaning of the *Deesis* and its iconographic variations, with earlier bibliography, see Anthony Cutler, "Under the sign of the Deesis: On the Question of Representativeness in Medieval Art and Literature," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 41 (1987), pp. 145–154; and Ioanna Zervou Tognazzi, "Deesis. Interpretazione del termine nell'iconografia bizantina," *Milion*, II (1990), pp. 391–416.

[48] For Torriti, see Alessandro Tomei, *Jacobus Torriti pictor* (Rome, 1990), with earlier bibliography.

[49] Belting, *Die Oberkirche*, pp. 74, 223–224.

[50] Idem, p. 223. The vaults of the evangelists and doctors of the church were also golden, evoking the splendor of Byzantine and Roman mosaics. The desire to create the appearance of mosaic is evident from John White's observation of grids of small rectangles deeply incised into the plaster, in sections of the Evangelists' vault. These, originally gilded, would have simulated the surface texture of mosaic. This time-consuming technique was later abandoned and is not present in the *Deesis*; "Cimabue and Assisi: Working Methods and Art Historical Consequences," *Art History* 4 (1981), pp. 371–372. Painting techniques in the *Deesis* vault are discussed in Carla D'Angelo et al., "Rilevamento dei dati tecnici della decorazione murale della Basilica Superiore," in *Il cantiere pittorico*, pp. 19–20.

The starry vault of the Sancta Sanctorum, Rome, is identified as the firmament, between heaven and earth, in Herbert L. Kessler and Johanna Zacharias, *Rome 1300. On the path of the pilgrim* (New Haven, 2000), p. 44.

of characters also conforms to Byzantine practice, which allowed considerable flexibility in the number and identity of saints included in the *Deesis*.[51] Depending on the patronage, scale, and site of the image, the viewer might anticipate these saints' prayers to benefit mankind in general, a particular community, an individual donor, the devotee who prays before the *Deesis*, or any combination of the above. At Assisi, however, the prayer for intercession is unusually explicit in giving voice to the group who prays to the saints, the congregation present in the church below the frescoed vault. The inscription around each saint's roundel is taken from the litany and addresses the saint with words actually spoken within the church, the congregation's petitions for assistance: "Ora pro nobis." In effect, the painted saints of the Assisi *Deesis* fulfill the role of Byzantine icons, receiving prayers which in theory were understood to be transmitted to the holy person portrayed, a role sanctioned by Bonaventure in his *Sentence Commentary*.

Although the basic meaning and iconic function of the Assisi *Deesis* conforms to Byzantine norms, the placement of this large-scale image on a vault over the nave does not.[52] This is a Franciscan adaptation unique to Assisi, as is the position of Saint Francis in direct proximity to the deity, on axis with him, as if of higher status than Mary or John the Baptist. His inclusion in the *Deesis*, hearing the prayers of the faithful, parallels the addition of his name to the *Confiteor*, decreed by the Statutes of Narbonne in 1260.[53] In interceding for the congregation, Francis is also a model for the viewer's own practice of prayer. As Bonaventure instructed novices, the Christian should not only tearfully petition God for his own mercy and salvation but should also pray for prelates and religious, "then

[51] Cutler, "Under the sign."

[52] The *Deesis* pictured at the summit of the sanctuary vault in the church of San Giovanni in Tubre (or Taufers, Alto Adige) has been noted as a possible model for Assisi; Brenk, "Zu den Gewölbefresken" (as in n. 1). This unusual 13th-century fresco possibly reflects a lost Byzantine model with the *Deesis* in a dome. The Tubre vault, however, seems a highly original pastiche that would not necessarily give an accurate picture of its models. The connection between the painted vaults of Assisi and Tubre remains problematic. For another iconography of the *Deesis* in a dome, see Tania Velmans, "L'image de la Déisis dans les églises de Géorgie et dans le reste du monde byzantin," pt. 2. *Cahiers archéologiques* 31 (1983), pp. 129–173.

[53] *St. Bonaventure's Writings Concerning the Franciscan Order*, trans. Dominic Monti (St. Bonaventure, 1994), p. 142. For Bonaventure's understanding of the saints' intercessory prayer as descent to man and ascent to God, see Johnson, *The Soul in Ascent*, pp. 145–147.

intercede for the whole Christian people," and finally, "pray for the dead and also for unbelievers," that all might receive God's gifts.[54]

Francis's special efficacy as an advocate is emphasized by his wounds (Fig. 7). Although his supplicatory pose mimics that of John and Mary, only Francis turns both palms to the viewer, clearly in order to display the stigmata, visually affirming the concept of Francis perfectly conformed to the image of Christ, *alter Christus*.[55] In the context of intercessory prayer, the display of wounds parallels Thomas of Celano's prayer, which places Francis among the angels in glory:

> O father [Francis], place before Jesus Christ, son of the Most High Father, his sacred stigmata; and show Him the signs of the cross on your hands, feet, and side, that he may mercifully bare His own wounds to the Father, and because of this, the Father will ever show us in our anguish His tenderness.[56]

The stigmata reiterate the essential link at Assisi between *Deesis* and crucifixion.

In medieval art, the *Deesis* is often seen incorporated into images of the Last Judgment, eloquently visualizing mankind's need for the mercy and intercession of the saints at the end of days. This portentous subject figured prominently on the walls of many medieval Italian churches, but not at Assisi.[57] To explain this omission, Hans Belting has suggested that the *Deesis* vault was intended to serve as an abbreviated substitute for the Last Judgment, citing a phrase from a bull issued by Clement IV (1265–68): "at the time of God's wrath," Francis will be mankind's advocate.[58] But if the *Deesis* vault at Assisi was meant to represent the Last Judgment, its message was extraordinarily hopeful. The dangers of the last days remain unstated; there is no weighing of the souls, no monstrous demons or tortures, only the triumph and mercy of God's mediators and intercessors. Evil is not unacknowledged, for Francis's wounds, imitating Christ's,

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[54] *St. Bonaventure's Writings*, p. 156.

[55] My thanks to Donal Cooper for suggesting the relevance of the concept of *alter Christus* to this image.

[56] *1C* 118, *FAED* 1, p. 287; *Fontes*, pp. 397–398.

[57] For images of the Last Judgment in Italy, see Iris Grötecke, *Das Bild des Jüngsten Gerichts: Die ikonographischen Konventionen in Italien und ihre politische Aktualisierung in Florenz* (Worms, 1997), with earlier bibliography.

[58] Belting, *Die Oberkirche*, pp. 73–74, 78, citing *Bullarium Franciscanum Romanorum Pontificum* 3, ed. Giovanni Giacinto Sbaraglia (reprt., Santa Maria degli Angeli, 1983), pp. 77–78, Nr. 76.

are the result of the suffering necessitated by mankind's sins. Christ, however, is shown in eternal perfection, unmarked by any sign of judgmental wrath or by wounds. In contrast, late thirteenth-century Italian images of the Last Judgment usually display Christ's wounds—sometimes with unprecedented emphasis—and introduce additional signs of suffering, the tools of the passion.[59]

The significance of the *Deesis*, I would suggest, is related not so much to mankind's judgment as to the deity's centrality. In the length of the entire building, the *Deesis* occupies the central position, at the third of the church's five bays (Figs. 1, 2). Visually and spatially, in its placement and imagery, this vault seems to bind together the architectural spaces of the church, its central prominence apparent to communities of worshipers on either side of the choir barrier, in the nave and sanctuary. The physical centrality of the *Deesis* can be seen as analogous to Bonaventure's concept of Christ as center: Christ is source, medium, and end-goal of creation. By 'medium', Bonaventure signifies Christ's central metaphysical and theological position, as well as his role as mediator and means of salvation.[60]

As center, the *Deesis* shows the origins and the end-fulfillment of the story begun in the nave with the *Creation* (Figs. 5, 15).[61] These two frescoes' depictions of the timeless deity—Christ of the *Deesis* and the Creator at the beginning of time—emphasize their interconnectedness. In each, the circular aureole suggests, traditionally, a cosmic dimension and, for Franciscans, the circle-metaphors of Bonaventure's christology. The multi-colored, diamond-patterned bands of these circles—which appear in similar contexts in Early Christian and Byzantine art—possibly refer to the "rainbow like an emerald" that surrounds the deity's celestial throne in Revelations 4:3, reinforcing the sense of beginning-and-end implied by these images.

The *Deesis* also represents center and beginning-and-end in relation to Francis's spiritual life, pictured in the frescoed *Legend of Saint Francis*. As Gerhard Ruf has noted, the scenes immediately under the *Deesis* show, on the one side, Francis's entry into religious life

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[59] Robert Nelson, "A Byzantine Painter in Trecento Genoa: The *Last Judgment* at S. Lorenzo," *Art Bulletin* 67 (1985), pp. 558–559. For examples, see Grötecke, *Das Bild*.

[60] For the radical Christocentrism of Bonaventure's thought, see esp. Cousins, *Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites*, pp. 130–159; and Hayes, *The Hidden Center*.

[61] Burkhart, *Franziskus*, pp. 30–31, 32–33, 195.

and, on the other, its culmination (Figs. 3, 4. 16, 17).[62] Francis leaves the mundane world with the *Renunciation of Worldly Goods*. His conversion is seen to originate in God, whose Hand gestures toward Francis, as if descending from the *Deesis*. The downward movement of God's blessing is reversed in the scene of the *Canonization of Saint Francis*, directly across the nave. In this scene, the church proclaims what is made manifest in the *Deesis* vault, Francis's ascent to the highest ranks of the saints.

Perhaps most powerful, however, is the relationship of the *Deesis* to the images of *Christus patiens* in Cimabue's transept frescoes and Giunta's rood-beam cross. Looking from the image of the *Christus patiens* to the vault of the *Deesis*, from either vantage point, choir or nave, the spaces of the Upper Church are pulled into a "coincidence of opposites," to use Ewert Cousins's apt characterization of Saint Bonaventure's christological theology.[63] At the crucifixion, Christ brings about a joining of opposites, binding the lowest degradation to the highest exaltation, so that "the way down becomes the way up"—the abasement of human death conjoined to the eternal glory pictured in the *Deesis*.[64] Visually, this conjunction would have been most striking from the nave, where Giunta's huge image of the *patiens* was aligned on the central axis of the church with the roundel of Christ as Hierarch, the latter oriented to face the worshiper standing in the congregational space. From the choir stalls of the apse and transept, full vision of the *Deesis* is more problematic. It is possible that relatively few of the friars and clergy in the sanctuary would have had an unimpeded view of the *Deesis*, since some choir stalls were probably placed too far at either end of the transept to see much of the nave, and, closer to the central axis of the church, Giunta's cross and (probably) other panels on the rood-beam might have partly obstructed the view of the nave vaults. Still, whether seen in actuality or "seen" with the inner eye of memory and knowledge, the spaces of the sanctuary are linked to the space of the nave

[62] Gerhard Ruf, *S. Francesco e S. Bonaventura: Un'interpretazione storico-salvifica degli affreschi della navata nella Chiesa Superiore di San Francesco in Assisi alla luce della teologia di San Bonaventura* (Assisi, 1974), p. 216; idem, *Die Fresken der Oberkirche San Francesco in Assisi: Ikonographie und Theologie* (Regensburg, 2004), pp. 260–261.

[63] Cousins, *Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites*. This concept is placed in a broader medieval context by Constance B. Bouchard, *"Every Valley Shall be Exalted": The Discourse of Opposites in Twelfth-Century Thought* (Ithaca, 2003).

[64] Cousins, *Bonaventure*, p. 144.

by sharing the "coincidence" of Christ's descent in the *Crucifixion* and ascent in the *Deesis*. From the sanctuary, a second compelling coincidence of opposites would also be apparent. In Cimabue's *Crucifixion* frescoes, Francis, with the stigmata, kneels abjectly at the foot of the cross; in the *Deesis*, he is ascendant, his image oriented to be seen upright from the choir (Figs. 7, 10).

The painted images of Christ's descent and ascent help to animate the space of worship by suggesting the path of salvation for all, made accessible to friars and laity alike through the crucifixion and its sacramental reenactment at the altar. Francis is the exemplary "pilgrim and pauper" who travels this path. While the narrative of his life surrounds most of the nave, its core significance is summed up by Francis's roles in the *Crucifixion* frescoes and *Deesis*: conformity to Christ in his lowest abasement enables conformity to his heavenly glory.

Mary's Intercession

The similar depictions of Christ in the *Deesis* and the *Creation* form a visual link between the eternal Hierarch and the Creator, instigator of human history, a story told in frescoes beginning in the first bay of the nave, on the north wall of (Fig. 3). On the south wall of the same bay, another fresco also has strong visual and thematic ties to the *Deesis*, the *Wedding at Cana* (Fig. 18).

Because the water at Cana was transformed into wine, the *Wedding at Cana* was often interpreted with eucharistic symbolism, a factor that most likely influenced the placement of the scene near the Upper Church's main altar.[65] But despite its significance for the Mass and its importance as the first of Christ's miracles, the *Wedding at Cana* seems to have rarely appeared in the painted decoration of medieval Italian churches.[66] The use of Byzantine iconography at Assisi is equally unusual, since contemporary Italian examples of *Cana* in wall-

[65] On the *Wedding at Cana* at Assisi, see Ruf, *S. Francesco*, pp. 98–101; idem, *Die Fresken*, pp. 171–174; and Burkhart, *Franziskus*, pp. 66–71.

[66] As Burkhart notes, the *Wedding at Cana* does not appear in other churches dependent on the lost pictorial cycles of St. Peter's or St. Paul's; *Franziskus*, p. 66. Exceptions, however, are in the Romanesque churches of San Pietro in Valle, Ferentillo (Umbria) and Sant'Angelo in Formis (fresco destroyed).

painting, panel, or manuscript illumination typically do not include its Byzantine features, such as Christ seated at the far left of the banquet table or the bride's crown with pendant jewels.[67] Although these choices and many other aspects of the fresco at Assisi merit further study, my remarks in this essay will be limited to the fresco's relationship to the *Deesis*, seen in the figure of the Virgin Mary.

Mary takes the same position in both scenes, her eyes turned out to gaze at the viewer, her neck angled forward and her right arm raised vertically, its hand open in supplication (Figs. 6, 19). The pose, which is not seen in other images of Mary in the Upper Church nave, repeats one of Rome's most important iconic types, that of the *Madonna Advocata*.[68] Several medieval Roman panels share this iconography, more or less faithfully copying a Byzantine panel of the sixth or eighth century that had probably been imported to Rome at an early date, the *Madonna Tempuli* (also called the *Madonna of San Sisto* and currently located at Santa Maria del Rosario) (Figs. 20, 21). By at least the twelfth century, the *Madonna Tempuli* was given the highest prestige, alleged to be an image miraculously painted by Saint Luke; and the same claim was eventually made for some of its medieval copies. In the fresco at Assisi, the crown placed low on Mary's brow and the angular gold border of her maphorion are distinctive features that unmistakably link the image to this medieval

[67] For the Byzantine iconography, see Paul A. Underwood, "Some Problems in Programs and Iconography of Ministry Cycles," in *The Kariye Djami*, 4 (Princeton, 1975), pp. 280–285. The Byzantine crown appears in early medieval Roman images of *Maria Regina* but, to my knowledge, not in 13th-century Italian images of *Cana*, such as the drawing in the *Supplicationes variae*; Bernhard Degenhart and Annegrit Schmitt, *Corpus der italieneschen Zeichnungen, 1300–1450* 1 (Berlin, 1968), pl. 10a. On the *Maria Regina*, see John Osborne, "Images of the Mother of God in Early Medieval Rome," in Antony Eastmond and Liz James, eds., *Icon and Word: Studies presented to Robin Cormack* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 135–156.

[68] This similarity has been noted by Julian Gardner, "Pope Nicholas IV and the Decoration of Santa Maria Maggiore," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 36 (1973), p. 47 n. 119; and Serena Romano, "La redazione del programma e lo svolgimento del cantiere della navata," in *La basilica*, p. 192. On the Roman icons of *Maria Advocata*, see Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, pp. 40, 314–329; Michele Bacci, *Il pennello dell'Evangelista. Storia delle immagini sacre attribuite a San Luca* (Pisa, 1998), pp. 255–273; Gerhard Wolf, *Salus Populi Romani. Die Geschichte römischer Kultbilder im Mittelalter* (Weinheim, 1990), pp. 161ff., 318ff.; idem, "Icons and sites. Cult images of the Virgin in mediaeval Rome," in *Images of the Mother of God. Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Aldershot, 2005), pp. 39–41; and Serena Romano, "Il ciclo di San Pietro in Valle: struttura e stile," in Giulia Tamanti, *Gli affreschi di San Pietro in Valle a Ferentillo: le storie dell'Antico e del Nuovo Testamento* (Naples, 2003), pp. 64–70.

Roman group. Mary's singularly dark complexion, not seen in other frescoes at Assisi, sets her apart from the other figures of the scene and may reflect the actual condition of a particularly venerated icon, darkened by the smoke of votive candles.

Unlike the portable panel-paintings of the *Advocata* group, Mary in the Assisi fresco is not an isolated portrait but acts in a narrative. This is unusual but not unique. Mary configured as the *Madonna Advocata* also appears in a late eleventh-century fresco of the *Adoration of the Magi*, in the Benedictine monastery church of San Pietro in Valle at Ferentillo (Fig. 22).[69] Here, Mary not only takes the appearance of the icon, but, as she receives the gifts of the three kings, she also plays a devotional role like that of the icon, venerated and offered gifts by the faithful. Possibly, whoever decided to insert the iconic figure of the *Advocata* into the scene of the Adoration was inspired by medieval drama or ritual enacted at the feast of Epiphany, when, in an unknown number of churches, clergy dressed as the Magi venerated *images* of the Madonna and Child.[70] I know of no similar paraliturgical enactment of the wedding at Cana, but the relationship between gospel narrative, iconic image, church ritual, and individual devotion is suggestive. As at Ferentillo, Assisi's fresco of Mary in the *Wedding at Cana* offers analogies to its iconic model that affect the viewer's perception of the narrative—and of Mary in the *Deesis*. Moreover, all this may have had a particular Franciscan reference.

The famed *Madonna Tempuli* was kept by nuns who adopted the Dominican rule in the thirteenth century. Its cultic prestige is evident from the fact that Saint Dominic himself carried it in procession, when the nuns moved to their new house at San Sisto, in

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[69] This copy of the *Madonna Advocata* icon is discussed by Herbert Kessler, "Corporeal Texts, Spiritual Paintings, and the Mind's Eye," in *Old St. Peter's and Church Decoration in Medieval Italy* (Spoleto, 2002), p. 172 (reprint from *Reading Images and Texts: Medieval Images and Texts as Forms of Communication*, eds. M. Hageman and M. Mostert [Turnhout, 2002]); and Romano, "Il ciclo di San Pietro in Valle," p. 65; for the dating of the Ferentillo frescoes, idem, pp. 71–72.

[70] Documented in texts from France, 11th–14th centuries, venerating statues of the enthroned Mary and Child, which were probably placed on altars; Ilene Forsyth, *The Throne of Wisdom: Wood Sculptures of the Madonna in Romanesque France* (Princeton, 1972), pp. 49, 55–59. An anecdote reporting the iconoclast emperor Leo V's refusal to honor a cloth icon of the Nativity on the feast of the Epiphany suggests that this kind of practice involving holy images may have been widespread, using icons or devotional images of various media. For this anecdote, see Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, p. 162.

1221.[71] It might seem odd that the mother-church of the Franciscans would feature an icon so closely associated with Dominicans, but possibly the image at San Francesco refers more directly to a medieval copy of the *Advocata*. One of these had come into the possession of the Franciscans only a few decades before the painting of the Upper Church nave. This twelfth-century copy of the *Madonna Tempuli* was apparently inherited by the Franciscans when they were granted use of the formerly Benedictine monastery of Santa Maria in Aracoeli, Rome, around 1248 (Fig. 21).[72] Although the Assisi fresco differs from the icon in some details, such as the vertical position of Mary's raised hand, it may nevertheless "copy" the Franciscans' icon. A mutual relationship is thereby created, which enhances both the prestige of the icon and the message of the fresco.

The Aracoeli icon emerged as one of Rome's most renowned icons in the mid-fourteenth century, as a protector of the city against the plague, singled out for veneration by Cola da Rienzo and venerated "by a confraternity to which almost the entire Roman people belonged."[73] There is evidence, however, that promotion of the icon's cult reaches back to the thirteenth century, to the time when the Franciscans were given use of the centrally placed, politically prominent church on the Capitoline hill.[74] Writing in the late fourteenth century, Bartholomew of Pisa describes a miracle that can be dated to 1257.[75] A novice at the Aracoeli, fearful that he would not be accepted in the order, prayed and wept in front of the "image that St. Luke painted of our Lady." His tears were taken by angels and placed before Mary—presumably in front of the painted image of the *Advocata*, since there is no mention of a miraculous apparition or vision of Mary. Mary spoke, again presumably through the image, reassuring the novice that not only would he prove to be a good Friar Minor, but also, "at the end," she will lead him to Christ.

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[71] Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, p. 320; Bacci, *Il pennello*, p. 263.

[72] On the Aracoeli icon, see Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, pp. 320–323, 532; Bacci, *Il pennello*, pp. 263–265, 322; Wolf, *Salus*, pp. 228ff.; and idem, "Icons," p. 41.

[73] Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, pp. 322–23, quoting Fra Mariano da Firenze's *Itinerarium Urbis Romae*. written in 1517.

[74] For a general history of the Franciscan church, see Marianna Brancia di Apricena, *Il Complesso dell'Aracoeli sul Colle Capitolino (IX–XIX secolo)* (Rome, 2000), pp. 63ff.

[75] Wolf, *Salus*, pp. 229–230. The miracle is recounted in Bartholomew of Pisa, *De Conformitate Vitae Beati Francisci ad Vitam Domini Iesu*, 1.9.2 (*Analecta Franciscana* 4, 1906), pp. 455–456.

While this story may not be unusual in illustrating the kind of beliefs and expectations attached to Marian icons, it suggests that by the late thirteenth century, the date of the Upper Church fresco and of extensive renovations at Santa Maria in Aracoeli, extraordinary powers were credited to the Aracoeli icon, including the promise of salvation through Mary's intervention.

Like the miracle later reported by Bartholomew of Pisa, the Assisi fresco of the *Wedding at Cana* might have helped to bolster the reputation of a new Franciscan church and its Marian cult. If the Aracoeli icon closely resembles Mary as she appears in the gospel story of Cana, the icon is concretely seen to possess authenticity—as if indeed a portrait painted by Saint Luke. The fresco also attests to the icon's power: in it, Mary is seen speaking directly and effectively to Christ, as the Aracoeli icon might "speak" on behalf of a devotee.

There is a rich literature of exegesis on the wedding at Cana, but one thread in the Franciscan tradition particularly emphasizes Mary's charity as an intercessor for mankind. For example, according to the late thirteenth-century *Speculum Beatae Mariae Virginis*, Mary requested her son to perform the miracle at Cana out of her compassion and mercy, thereby providing hope for the needy: "For if [Mary] had compassion for the shame of those whose guest she was, much more will she have compassion on you if you call upon her earnestly."[76] Mary's pose in the Assisi fresco visualizes her plea for Christ's mercy and her compassionate response to human need. In referring to the Aracoeli icon, it also seems to promise that at Cana Mary's response to prayer is like that of the miraculous *Advocata*, applicable not only to the historical characters of a gospel story but also to those who stand in the church below her image. Conversely, the "quotation" suggests that the Aracoeli icon in Rome is an authoritative vehicle through which worshipers might obtain that response. These themes recur in the *Deesis*, where, although Mary is not crowned, her pose of supplication repeats the *Advocata* type, emphasizing the privileged intercessory role established for Mary at Cana and the special power of the Roman icon (Fig. 6).[77]

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[76] Quoted in Anne Derbes and Mark Sandona, "'Ave charitate plena': Variations on the Theme of Charity in the Arena Chapel," *Speculum* 76 (2001), pp. 615–617.

[77] Torriti also uses this pose for Mary, with its reference to the *Advocata*, in Roman apse mosaics at San Giovanni in Laterano and Santa Maria Maggiore, both commissioned by the Franciscan pope, Nicholas IV.

Conclusion: *Deesis*, Pantocrator and Sacred Space

The placing of an image of the *Deesis* over a congregational space is highly unusual in either Italy or Byzantium. In a basilica, the vault at the longitudinal center of the nave is generally not given special emphasis, which would conflict with the axial focus of the architectural space toward the apse.[78] And while medieval Byzantine church plans are typically centralized around a vertical axis and topped by a dome, the central, focal position of the interior is held by the *Pantocrator*, Ruler of All, as seen, for example, in the powerful mosaic of ca. 1100 from Daphni, near Athens (Figs. 23, 24).[79] Hovering over the Byzantine naos, the *Pantocrator* is at the summit of a hierarchically ordered space, encompassing and dominating it, just as the eternal creator encompasses and dominates heaven and earth. Although the medallion of Christ in the Assisi *Deesis* does not enjoy the vertical axiality or the isolated monumental presence of the image in the dome, it conceptually approximates the *Pantocrator*, who, as defined by the pseudo-Dionysius, "produces all things from out of himself as a source that holds all and draws all things back to himself; as a support that maintains all, he holds the universe as an all-container. . . ."[80] The similarity to Bonaventure's thought is clear.[81]

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[78] A symbolic and spatial accent to the center of the nave was, however, sometimes created by the placement of a large cross, either free-standing or mounted on a rood-beam. Most of these, however, were on central axis but not longitudinally central, placed close to the apse, more or less like Giunta Pisano's cross at Assisi. For the tradition of centrally placed crosses in the nave, see Cooper, *In medio ecclesiae*, 1, pp. 130–131.

[79] This section is especially indebted to Thomas F. Mathews's study of the Byzantine *Pantocrator*: "Transformation Symbolism in Byzantine Architecture," in *Church and People in Byzantium*, ed. R. Morris (Birmingham, 1990), pp. 191–214. See also Salvatore Barbagallo, *Iconografia liturgica del Pantokrator* (Analecta Liturgica) 22 (Rome, 1996).

[80] Pseudo-Dionysius, *De divinis nominibus*, as cited by Mathews, "Transformation Symbolism," p. 206. The Pantocrator could also be perceived as a figure of judgment (see Henry Maguire, "The Cycle of Images in the Church," in *Heaven on Earth: Art and the Church in Byzantium*, ed. Linda Safran (University Park, 1998), pp. 137–138), an aspect that is present, but, as argued above, muted, at Assisi. My analogy between the Assisi *Deesis* and the *Pantocrator* of Byzantine domed churches parallels that recently made by Ruf, *Die Fresken*, pp. 47, 320.

[81] For Bonaventure's use of pseudo-Dionysius's terminology and concepts, see J. Guy Bougerol, *Introduction to the Works of Bonaventure*, trans. José de Vinck (Paterson, 1964), pp. 39ff., 80–81, 123–124, 157.

The designers of San Francesco adapted a Byzantine image of the deity to a basilican church with quadripartite bays. To the extent possible within this architectural structure, Christ of the *Deesis* is centrally placed. Like many Byzantine images of the *Pantocrator* in the dome, he is depicted bust-length, unwounded, within a circle intimating eternity and patterned with multi-colored diamonds, the "rainbow like an emerald." Perhaps, however, the most significant point of similarity between the Byzantine *Pantocrator* in the dome and Christ of the Assisi *Deesis* is that both can be said to activate the architectural space below as a place of prayer and spiritual transformation, by picturing the deity who is simultaneously the origin and the end-goal of worshipers' sacraments and prayers. Bonaventure's emphasis on the worshiper's self-transformation into the likeness of Christ is analogous to a primary role of Christ in the Byzantine dome, who represents "the full, perfect self that the beholder becomes"[82]—or seeks to become. We have scarce evidence of the friars' response to the Byzantine churches they must have seen in their travels to the east. Still, it seems valid to speculate that the church at Assisi was intended to combine the western basilica's focus on the sacrificial altar with the conceptual and spatial dynamics of the Byzantine *Pantocrator* in the dome.[83] Without pushing an exact comparison, a loose analogy might be suggested to Bonaventure's theological synthesis, which brings together a western emphasis on Christ's death as payment for sins with eastern traditions more focused on the cosmic reparation of divine order—the worshiper's transformation into the likeness of Christ, enabling return to the godhead, the *Pantocrator*.[84]

The *Pantocrator* in the Assisi *Deesis* is blond and radiant, suffused with light (Fig. 5). Although many medieval images of Christ hold a book inscribed, "I am the light of the world," to my knowledge, the emphatic *visual* luminosity of this image is unparalleled in late thirteenth-century Italian examples. It is probably correct to see in

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[82] Mathews, "Transformation Symbolism," p. 212.

[83] In the 13th century, Latins occupied many Byzantine churches. Daphni, for example, was a Cistercian monastery from ca. 1210; Robin Cormack, *Byzantine Art* (Oxford, 2000), p. 169. For Franciscan encounters with Byzantine art, see Anne Derbes and Amy Neff, "Italy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Byzantine Sphere," in *Byzantium: Faith & Power (1260–1557)*, exh. cat., ed. Helen Evans (New York, 2004), pp. 448–461.

[84] The complexity of this issue reaches beyond the scope of this paper; but see Hayes, *The Hidden Center*, pp. 152–191.

its painted radiance the influence of Byzantine painting technique.[85] Jacopo Torriti was perhaps also inspired by recent Byzantine iconography; around 1300, Byzantine art begins to show very blond and fair portrayals of Christ.[86] As with many motifs shared by late thirteenth-century Italy and Byzantium, uncertain dating makes questions of priority problematic. But whether or not the Assisi image is dependent on a model from Byzantium, its radiance was surely meant to reflect the language of Bonaventure's theology, in which traditional metaphors of light are given unprecedented emphasis. Bonaventure describes the godhead as "Father of Lights," "Fount of lights," "the pure brightness of the eternal light, . . . light illuming every light, and keeping in perpetual splendor a thousand times a thousand lights brilliantly shining. . . ."[87] Moreover, light is Bonaventure's preferred metaphor for the grace that descends from the Father and leads those who pray upward, returning them to God.[88] In the *Deesis* vault, Christ is presented as the source-in-light and consummation-in-light that Bonaventure envisions guiding the path of prayer.

The luminosity of Christ's face also suggests the apocalyptic deity whose face is like the sun (Rev. 1:16). In eschatological terms, the heavenly hierarchy pictured in the vault envisions the end of days, the era of the perfected Church, the New Jerusalem. Francis partakes in this vision, transformed by light (Fig. 7). His tunic is no longer dull gray or brown, as in the narrative frescoes of his life, but shines with rosy tones and brilliant highlights. Yet, even while Francis is linked to Christ glorified in light, his wounds link him to Christ debased and crucified. Francis in the *Deesis* is thus a powerful model for the worshiper in the Upper Church. By uniting the stigmata, signs of Francis's ardent love for the crucified, with luminous glory, the image exemplifies how the one leads to the other. On this path, the worshiper's prayers could be stimulated and sustained through understanding and contemplation of the crucified Christ in death and the *Deesis* in the nave of the Upper Church.

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[85] Romano, "La redazione" (as in n. 68), pp. 189–190.

[86] See, for example, a mosaic icon of the *Pantocrator*, attributed to Constantinople, ca. 1300–1350; *Byzantium: Faith & Power*, cat. 132.

[87] The long quote is from *The Tree of Life*; trans. Cousins, *Bonaventure*, pp. 170–71; *Lig vit* 12:47 (8.85a) For Bonaventure's theological use of light metaphors, see Bonaventure's *On the Reduction of the Arts to Theology*, ed. Zachary Hayes, in *Works of St. Bonaventure*, vol. 1 (St. Bonaventure, 1996), esp. pp. 4–6, 13–21.

[88] Johnson, "Into the Light," pp. 247–248.

Thus, even while the *Deesis* represents the celestial grandeur and transcendent wisdom of the hierarchical Church Triumphant, themes emphasized by Belting, it also speaks to the individual seeking personal transformation. The prayers inscribed around each saint of the *Deesis* imply that the congregation's petitions are heard and received, while the Virgin's similarity to a miraculous icon emphasizes the immediacy and effectiveness of her intercession. The visual linking of the *Deesis* to the *Christus patiens* provides a suggestive visualization of the salvific relationship between Christ's death and the possibility of human salvation through compassionate prayer.

TRADITIONS IN TIME

FRANCISCAN LITURGICAL PRAYER[1]

Edward Foley

Introduction

Liturgy is technically defined as the official public worship of the Church. Since the promulgation of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (1963) this includes all rites contained in officially published post-conciliar liturgical books, including: the sacraments, the liturgy of the hours, and various other officially approved rites.[2] It does not include private prayers, devotional practices or other pious exercises. This late twentieth century definition of liturgical prayer was not that of the late medieval period, however, where distinctions between devotional practices and public worship were less clearly defined, and ritual books did not require the ecclesial approbations that are necessary today. Consequently, under the rubric "liturgical" the mapping of early Franciscan liturgical practices could include a breadth of public rituals which the followers of Francis were either required or encouraged to undertake. Given the centrality of the Eucharist and the Divine Office in Francis's own life and writings, as well as their importance in the emergence of a distinctive style of Franciscan prayer, we will focus primarily on these key elements. Furthermore, given the ferment and even tumult around liturgical issues in the emerging Franciscan community, we will concentrate on developments in the first half of the thirteenth century. Also, given the prejudice in the maxim *lex orandi, lex credendi*[3] for a ritual rather than

[1] I am grateful to Br. William Hugo, OFM Cap. for his assistance in the preparation of this article.

[2] These include the rites of installation to the liturgical ministries of acolyte and reader; rites for dying (viaticum and the commendation of the dying); rites of Christian burial; rites for the dedication of a church, religious profession and consecration of virgins; and the contents of the revised Roman *Book of Blessings*. Lawrence Madden, "Liturgy," *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship*, ed. Peter Fink (Collegeville, 1990), p. 741.

[3] The *locus classicus* of this notion is the maxim of Prosper of Aquitaine, "*legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*" (*PL* 51:209); for a further discussion of this concept see Paul De Clerck, "'Lex orandi, lex credendi,' Sens originel et avatars historiques d'un adage équivoque," *Questions liturgiques* 59 (1978), pp. 193–212.

speculative focus, this article will not focus on liturgical or sacramental beliefs (e.g., Francis's understanding of the nature of Christ's eucharistic presence)[4] as much as on liturgical practices. Finally, because of the breadth of early Franciscan practices, and the distinctive issues that arose around issues of clericalism and priestly ministry, a last delimitation is the restriction of these considerations to those practices of those today classified as "First Order" Franciscans. Thus, we will not consider the liturgical practices of the followers of Clare or members of the Third Order.

The Eucharist

The Wider Context

Thirteenth century Europe was an era of liturgical pluriformity in regards to eucharistic celebrations. While the Gregorian reforms begun under Gregory VII (pope from 1073–1085) were an attempt to exercise more control over the design and performance of the Roman Liturgy, there was widespread diversity in this era both in regards to the texts that were employed as well as the ritual actions included in the Mass. In the midst of such variance, there were also recognizable patterns of eucharistic practice across European Christianity in this period. The practice of private Mass was on the rise, and the ritual texts for these Masses were frequently of a "votive" nature (e.g., *Missa de beata Maria*). The eucharistic participation of the faithful was quite limited, and the infrequency of their communion so widespread and persistent that the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) required the faithful to make a yearly confession and receive communion at least once during the Easter season (canon 21). Under the influence of what James Russell labels "Germanization,"[5] there arose a more magico-religious interpretation of Christianity and its rituals, resulting in great physical and spiritual distance between the people and priests responsible for performing the sacred acts, as well as increased focus on the objects employed at Mass.[6] This magico-

[4] On this topic, see Kajetan Esser, "Missarum sacramenta: La dottrina eucaristica di S. Francesco d'Assisi," *Temi Spirituali* (Milano, 1981), pp. 231–284.

[5] James Russell, *The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity: A Sociohistorical Approach to Religious Transformation* (New York, 1994).

[6] Russell, *The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity*, p. 191.

religious approach often led to abuses, both on the part of the faithful as well as the clergy. With the introduction of the elevation in the thirteenth century, the faithful—constantly burdened with the threat of receiving communion unworthily—were often satisfied with "ocular communion" rather than actual reception of the host.[7] This specter of unworthiness also affected the clergy, who regularly added to the Mass texts private *apologiae* and deprecatory prayers.[8] Another common liturgical abuse was the acceptance of multiple stipends for a single Mass, or the taking of a stipend for celebrating a *Missa sicca*, usually celebrated without a chasuble, in which the priest simply read selected Mass texts without any bread or wine. Such abuses revealed in a particular way how priesthood of the era was defined by the act of offering the Sacrifice of the Mass; it was particularly the act of consecration which numerous theologians upheld as the essential act of priesthood.[9]

Important for the development of the Roman Rite and Franciscan practice were the liturgical reforms under Innocent III (pope from 1201–16). A gifted administrator, whose curia was experiencing the pressures of spiraling papal business,[10] Innocent instigated a reform of the liturgies for the papal court, resulting in a much simplified liturgical ordo.[11] While no extant missal from Innocent III nor from his successor Honorius III (pope from 1216–27) survives, van Dijk believes that the liturgical reforms of the papal court during this period and in particular the lost "missal of Honorius III"[12] were important sources for Franciscan eucharistic practice.

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[7] Edouard Dumoutet, *Le désir de voir l'Hostie* (Paris, 1926); also, V.L. Kennedy, "The Moment of consecration and the elevation of the Host," *Medieval Studies* 6 (1944), pp. 121–150.

[8] Joanne Pierce, "Sacerdotal Spirituality at Mass: Text and study of the Prayerbook of Sigebert of Minden (1022–1036)" (University of Notre Dame: Ph.D. dissertation, 1988).

[9] A summation of such perspectives is found in Thomas Aquinas who defines priesthood not only by its relationship to priesthood, but in the power to consecrate, e.g., "A priest has two acts: one is principal, namely to consecrate the body of Christ; the other is secondary, namely to prepare the people of God for the reception of the sacrament." *Summa Theologica* III, q. 40, a. 4, resp.

[10] R.W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth, 1970), pp. 105–117.

[11] Stephen J.P. van Dijk and Joan Hazelden Walker, *The Ordinal of the Papal Court from Innocent III to Boniface VIII and related documents* (Fribourg, 1975).

[12] Stephen van Dijk and Joan Hazelden Walker, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy* (Westminster, 1960), pp. 165–172; also, van Dijk, *The Ordinal of the Papal Court*, p. xxx.

Francis and the Eucharist[13]

It was during the celebration of the Eucharist, probably on the feast of St. Matthias (24 February 1208),[14] in the Portiuncula that Francis received those divine inspirations toward poverty and penance that necessitated a change in his life and vocation.[15] The parallel story of Francis's threefold opening of the Missal[16] on the altar at the Church of Saint Nicholas in Assisi with companions Bernard and Peter a few weeks later suggested to D'Angers that while the seeds of the Seraphic rule were in the Gospel, the center of the rule was given to us in a liturgical book[17] employed at the heart of the celebration of the Eucharist. These seminal stories symbolize something of the liturgical and eucharistic aspects of Francis's own spirituality as well as the importance of liturgical contexts in shaping the life of his followers.

While Francis may not directly speak about the Mass and the Eucharist as much as other topics of prayer and contemplation,[18] his deep eucharistic devotion is imbedded in words of exhortation to his followers and well documented by his biographers. Celano, for example, noted that "He considered it disrespectful not to hear, if time allowed at least one Mass a day. He received Communion frequently and so devoutly that he made others devout."[19] The *Mirror of Perfection* records that even when he was lying ill, Francis wished to attend Mass whenever possible and often asked Benedict or another of his

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[13] For more detail concerning the Eucharist in Francis's writings see Bertrand Cornet, "Le *De reverentia Corporis Domini*. Exhortation et lettre de saint François," *Études Franciscaines* 6 (1955), pp. 65–91, 167–180; 7 (1956) 20–25, 155–171; 8 (1957) 33–58.

[14] *1C* 22, *FAED* 1, p. 201–202; *Fontes*, pp. 296–297; also *L3C* 25, *FAED* 2, p. 84; *Fontes*, p, 1398; and Bonaventure *LMj*, 3.1, *FAED* 2, p. 542; *Fontes*, p. 794.

[15] Octave d'Angers, "La messe publique et privée dans la piété de Saint François," *Études Franciscaines* 49 (1937), p. 475.

[16] To Mt 19:21, Lk 9:3 and Mt 16:24; see *L3C* 29, *FAED* 2, p. 86; *Fontes*, pp. 1401–1402. The actual Missal that Francis employed did not have the Mt 19:21 text but the parallel Mk 10:21. For a discussion of this point and a critical study of this missal, see Gebhard C.P. Voorvelt and Bertulf P. van Leeuwen, "L'Evangéliaire de Baltimore: Étude Critique sur le Missel que Saint François aurait consulté," *Collectanea Franciscana* 59 (1989), pp. 261–278.

[17] d'Angers, "La messe publique et privée dans la piété de Saint François," p. 476.

[18] Julio Micó, "The Spirituality of St. Francis: 'To adore the Lord God: Francis's Prayer,'" trans. Paul Barrett, *Greyfriars Review* 9.1 (1995), p. 30.

[19] *2C* 201, *FAED* 2, p. 375; *Fontes*, p. 618.

followers to celebrate Eucharist for him.[20] While this source does not specify that Francis received communion on such occasions, it is appropriate to assume that he did so, given that he was seriously ill as well as the intimate context of such private Masses offered by his brother priests. Francis's frequency of communion was unusual for a period in which infrequency of communion by the faithful led to the mandate that they were to receive at least once a year.

This is not to suggest that communion for Francis was free of concern about unworthiness. While in the form of an exhortation to his followers, his admonition to "eat and drinking worthily, because anyone who receives unworthily . . . eats and drinks judgment on himself"[21] speaks of his own minority and self-awareness that he was a "little and looked-down-upon servant"[22] in the presence of "the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ."[23] In a letter written at the end of his life, Francis hymned, "Let everyone be struck with fear, let the whole world tremble, and let the heavens exult when Christ, the Son of the living God, is present on the altar in the hands of a priest."[24] Thus he called others, presumably in imitation of himself, to offer praise and glory to God "on bended knee" whenever Mass was being celebrated or even when the Eucharist was being carried anywhere.[25]

Not surprisingly, Francis frequently links the reception of Eucharist to the life of penance. In his *Earlier Exhortation*, Francis maps the essential elements of a penitential lifestyle. Penitential living for Francis not only includes but seems to prize reception of Christ's Body and Blood.[26] Aware of the instructions of Lateran IV regarding yearly confession and communion, Francis also recognized the bond between

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[20] *2MP* 87, *FAED* 3, p. 335; *Fontes*, p. 1993.
[21] *2LtF* 22, *FAED* 1, p. 47; *Opuscula*, p. 209.
[22] *LtR*, *FAED* 1, p. 58; *Opuscula*, p. 275.
[23] This common phrase in Francis's own writings does not indicate that Francis received the consecrated wine, which would have been highly unusual in the early thirteenth century. Rather, it underscores the widespread acceptance of the theory of "concomitance" (*per concomitantiam*) which held that the Body and Blood of Christ are present in each of the consecrated elements, so that when the bread was consecrated into Christ's body, the blood of Christ was also present. See J.J. McGivern, *Concomitance and Communion: A Study in Eucharistic Doctrine and Practice* (Fribourg, 1963).
[24] *LtOrd* 26, *FAED* 1, p. 118; *Opuscula*, p. 261.
[25] *1LtCus* 17, *FAED* 1, p. 57; *Opuscula*, p. 170.
[26] Thus, those who do not live a penitential lifestyle are characterized by Francis, in part, as "those who do not receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ." *1LtF* 2.1, *FAED* 1, p. 43; *Opuscula*, p. 179.

eucharistic reception and the sacrament of penance. In his *Later Admonition*, his exhortation to others can again be understood as a self-revelation when he writes, "We must, of course, confess all our sins to a priest and receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ from him."[27] In the absence of a priest, he often exhorts his followers to confess their sins to each other,[28] as Francis himself often did both in person and in his writings.[29] This common practice was affirmed by theologians such as Thomas Aquinas who recognized that in case of necessity a lay person may take the place of a priest and hear another's confession.[30]

Apart from the celebration of Mass and the reception of communion, there is strong evidence of Francis's devotion to the reserved sacrament. Emblematic of this devotion is his testamental statement, "I want to have these most holy mysteries honored and venerated above all things and I want to reserve them in precious places."[31] Previously in his *Testament*, Francis records a favored acclamation "We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ, in all your churches throughout the whole world and we bless You because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world."[32] In Celano's relating of a similar passage, he links the acclamation to a description of how the brothers, seeing a church in the distance, would prostrate on the ground in its direction and recite the text.[33] In the following verse, Celano notes how they would do the same thing if they saw a crucifix. While this acclamation was used before the cross, its use was not univocal, and also served Francis as a salutation to the reserved sacrament.

Parallel to Francis's reverence for the reserved sacrament was his reverence for the Word of God. Again, in his *Testament* he notes that "wherever I find our Lord's most holy names and written words in unbecoming places, I want to gather them up and I beg that they be gathered up and placed in a becoming place."[34] While parallel passages make this clear that this reverence is not restricted in any

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[27] *2LtF* 23, *FAED* 1, p. 47; *Opuscula*, p. 209.
[28] *ER* 20.3, *FAED* 1, p. 77; *Opuscula*, p. 394; also *LtM* 9–12, *FAED* 1, pp. 97–98; *Opuscula*, p. 232.
[29] E.g., *LtOrd* 38–39, *FAED* 1, p. 119; *Opuscula*, p. 262.
[30] *Summa Theologica* III, q. 8, a. 2, resp.
[31] *Test* 11, *FAED* 1, p. 125; *Opuscula*, p. 439.
[32] *Test* 4, *FAED* 1, p. 124; *Opuscula*, p. 438.
[33] *1C* 45, *FAED* 1, p. 222; *Fontes*, p. 320.
[34] *Test* 12, *FAED* 1, p. 125; *Opuscula*, p. 439.

way to liturgical books,[35] it must also have included a reverence for liturgical books which, as noted above, were important media for shaping the Seraphic rule.

A final source of information on the eucharistic aspects of Francis's spirituality is reflected in his great reverence for priests. We have already alluded to the intimate link both pastorally and theologically between the priesthood and the Eucharist in the thirteenth century, and especially between priesthood and the consecrated species. A man of his time, it is clear that Francis's reverence for the ordained was largely contingent upon this vision of a "eucharistic priesthood." There is probably no clearer expression of this than in his *Later Admonition* in which Francis refuses to look down upon or judge any priest, even though he might be a sinner, because "of their office and administration of the most holy Body and Blood of Christ which they sacrifice upon the altar, receive and administer to others. And let all of us know for certain that no one can be saved except through the holy words and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which the clergy pronounce, proclaim and minister."[36] Celano's biographies of Francis are filled with stories of Francis's reverence for priests.[37]

Francis's instructions on Eucharist for his followers

While clearly related to his own beliefs about the Eucharist, Francis also provided certain directions about eucharistic practice for his followers. Some of these issues we have already addressed when treating Francis's own eucharistic life and devotion. For example, Francis often admonished his followers to reverence priests, particularly in his *Letter to the Entire Order*,[38] and his concern for worthy reception of the Eucharist that included preparation through the sacrament of Penance is embedded in the *Earlier Rule*.[39] He also admonished his

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[35] The later *2LtCl*, for example, broadly speaks of Francis's reference for "the names and written words of the Lord," 12, *FAED* 1, p. 54; *Opuscula*, p. 164. This is elaborated in his *LtOrd* 34–37, *FAED* 1, p. 119; *Opuscula*, pp. 261–262; also *1LtCus* 5, *FAED* 1, p. 56; *Opuscula*, p. 170.

[36] *2LtF* 33–4, *FAED* 1, pp. 47–48; *Opuscula*, p. 210; also see *Test*, 6–9, *FAED* 1, p. 125; *Opuscula*, p. 438; *Adm* 26, *FAED* 1, p. 136; *Opuscula*, pp. 116–117: and *1 Frag* 57, *FAED* 1, p. 90; *Opuscula*, p. 304.

[37] E.g., *1C* 9, 46, 62, 75, *FAED* 1, pp. 189, 223, 238, 246; *Fontes*, pp. 285, 320–1, 338, 350; *2C* 8, 146, 201, *FAED* 2, pp. 247, 341, 376; *Fontes*, pp. 450, 573, 618.

[38] *LtOrd* 12, *FAED* 1, p. 117; *Opuscula*, p. 259; also see note 24 above.

[39] *ER* 20, *FAED* 1, pp. 77–78; *Opuscula*, p. 394.

priest brothers to celebrate the Eucharist with reverence, and to avoid celebrating " for any worldly reason or out of fear of love of anyone, as if they were pleasing people."[40] Such an admonition is understandable given the many abuses surrounding stipends, and the manipulation of eucharistic practices for personal gain during this era. A related admonition is Francis's request that Leo delay his personal prayers of thanksgiving until after the Mass is finished, a concern related to the tendency for priests of that period to add growing numbers of personal *apologiae* to the celebration. Francis warned that such could not only be a source of temptation for Leo, but also a trial for the faithful "who may grow weary of waiting for you."[41]

Frequently Francis exhorts his followers to honor the eucharistic presence of Christ with cleanliness and propriety. Virtually the whole of both letters to the clergy as well as his early letter to the custodians treat this issue, which is also briefly revisited in his *Testament.* In his earlier exhortation, Francis writes "Let all those who administer such most holy mysteries . . . consider how very dirty are the chalices, corporals and altar-linens upon which his Body and Blood are sacrificed. . . . Wherever the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ has been illicitly placed and left, let it be removed from there, placed in a precious place and locked up."[42] Reflecting the legislative directives of Lateran IV which required that the Eucharist and chrism were to be kept under lock and key (canon 20), Francis explicates that his directives are in conformity with the canons of the Church in the later edition of his exhortation to the clergy when he notes that "we are bound to observe . . . all of these matters according to the precepts of the Lord and the constitutions of holy mother Church."[43] Celano illustrates this concern for the reservation of the sacrament when he notes that at one time, Francis wished to send "brothers throughout the world with precious pyxes, so that wherever they should find the price of our redemption in an unsuitable place they might put it away in the very best place."[44]

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[40] *LtOrd* 14, *FAED* 1, p. 117; *Opuscula*, p. 260.

[41] *Liber exemplorum Fratrum Minorum Saec. XIII* as cited in van Dijk, *Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, p. 56.

[42] *1LtCl* 4; 11, *FAED* 1, pp. 52–53; *Opuscula* p. 163.

[43] *2LtCl* 13, *FAED* 1, pp. 54–55, also footnote a, p. 55; *Opuscula* 165.

[44] *2C* 201, *FAED* 2, pp. 375–376; *Fontes*, p. 618.

Francis gives few directives about the form and celebration of the Eucharist, and it is only after his death that the friars will acquire a "Franciscan missal" prescribing a common form of eucharistic celebration. As the friar's early liturgical life was usually led by brothers lacking major orders, the focus in the early Franciscan community was more on the Divine Office than Mass. Thus, for example, there is no reference to Mass in *A Rule for Hermitages*. As for instructions about the shape and celebration of the Mass, early sources are sparse, and the *Earlier Rule* does not even speak of the Mass but only the reception of communion.[45] This situation began to change in Francis's own lifetime, however, as more ordained brothers joined the community. Thus already in 1224 Honorius III granted the brothers the privilege of using portable altars for celebrating Eucharist in their own houses and chapels.[46] It is in this context that, in *A Letter to the Entire Order*, Francis directs the brothers "to celebrate only one Mass a day according to the rite of the Holy Church in those places where the brothers dwell. But if there is more than one priest there, let the other be content, for the love of charity, at hearing the celebration of the other priest."[47] While there is some disagreement about the interpretation of this passage, given Francis's concerns about poverty and humility, it seems credible to interpret the passage as a rejection of the commonplace practice of multiplying Masses with their accompanying stipends, and a valuing of the conventual over private Mass for the good of the fraternity. The passage can also be understood as an admonishment to the brothers to follow the ordos approved in the dioceses in which they minister, rather than consistently following any single eucharistic pattern such as that used in the papal household.

Eucharistic Developments after Francis

Francis and his followers from the city and diocese of Assisi had been shaped by the rites and worship patterns of Rome which heavily influenced the worship of this and other surrounding diocese. As the brothers did not have any churches of their own until 1222,

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[45] *ER* 20.3, *FAED* 1, p. 78; *Opuscula*, p. 394.

[46] *Quia populares tumultus* (3 December 1224) in *Bullarium Franciscanum* I, p. 20, *FAED* 1, pp. 562–563.

[47] *LtOrd* 30, *FAED* 1, p. 119; *Opuscula*, p. 261.

they attended Mass at whatever parish church or monastery was available to them[48] and thus were exposed to various styles of eucharistic celebration outside of the area. We have already noted how by 1224 the brothers received papal permission for celebrating Mass in their own chapels. At the chapter of 1230 the general of the Order, John Parenti, issued a decree on eucharistic reservation, ordering that "the body of Christ should be reserved with the greatest reverence in a silver and ivory pyx in a well locked *capsella*."[49] This suggests that by this time each house was supposed to have a chapel, where Eucharist would regularly be celebrated. Initially the brothers would have begged for Mass books for their worship. By 1230, however, there appeared the prototype Franciscan missal or *Regula* missal (or *Paratus*),[50] issued under the approval of the Chapter of Assisi in 1230. Van Dijk contends that the *Regula* missal is a reliable copy of the lost missal of Honorius III. This missal type (fully rubricated, notated with Gregorian repertoire in Beneventan notation) was soon carried by the brothers wherever they ministered, and eventually became a predominant type of Mass book, and vehicle for exporting the style of eucharistic celebrated by the Roman curia across Christendom. Jungmann holds that its close identification with and representation of the *Missale secundum consuetudinem Romanae curiae* contributed to its prevalence in the whole of the Latin Church and insured its pivotal place in the shaping of the Missal of Pius V in 1570.[51]

The immediate acceptance and distribution of the *Regula* missal within the order, however, was not without its obstacles. During the second generalate of Elias of Cortona (1232–39), who was a lay brother (as were most of the earlier followers of Francis), ascendancy was ceded to the lay brothers who assumed most leadership positions in the community while the clerical brothers were temporarily

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[48] The following is reliant on van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, pp. 237 ff.

[49] *Chronica xxiv Generalium*, in *Analecta Franciscana* 3 (1897), p. 211; trans. Stephen J.P. van Dijk, and J. Hazelden Walker in *The Myth of the Aumbry* (London, 1957), p. 51.

[50] While the prototype is lost, there are four extant manuscripts copied from the original and dating from later in the thirteenth century; see van Dijk, *The Ordinal of the Papal Court*, p. xxx; also, idem., *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, pp. 239–244.

[51] Joseph Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, 2 vols., trans. Francis Brunner (New York, 1950), I, pp. 101–102.

eclipsed.[52] With a leadership less concerned about the order of Mass within the community, the promulgation of the *Regula* missal was at least uneven if not stalled, making the history of this prototype even more difficult to map.[53]

Things changed with the election of Haymo of Faversham as general of the order in 1240. A strong critic of Elias and his vision of the Order, Haymo was instrumental at the chapter of 1239 in getting approval for a ban on the appointment of lay brothers to offices in the Order, and when he was General Haymo declared that the lay brothers were unfit for the offices of the Order.[54] His concerns for the liturgical life of the Order precipitated significant contributions regarding the celebration of the Eucharist and the Office. Aided by a treatise from four Franciscan Masters at the University of Paris,[55] he presented at the chapter of Bologna in 1242/3 the Mass ordo *Indutus planeta*, regulating both the texts and the ritual actions, designed for the ordained brothers celebrating the two most common forms of Mass among the brothers: private Mass and conventual Mass on ferials.[56] As van Dijk has demonstrated, the work was heavily reliant upon the liturgical books of the papal chapel under Innocent III. What is unique in the work is that, although the ordained brothers had an ordo of texts for solemn Mass in the *Regula* missal, they had no detailed descriptions of the actions either for private or solemn Mass,[57] which the *Indutus* now supplied. After completing this first Mass "booklet," and under the direction of Innocent IV, Haymo forged ahead with further revisions. By the time of his death in 1244, he had produced a more complete Franciscan ordo for the Mass.[58] As van Dijk summarizes, this was not a new Missal but a correction of the *Regula* consisting of 1) a new arrangement and style of rubrics, 2) a more realistic agreement between the Mass book and the calendar, and 3) the codification of twenty years of development

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[52] Raoul Manselli, "St. Bonaventure and the Clericalization of the Friars Minor," trans. Patrick Colbourne, *Greyfriars Review* 4.2 (1990), p. 89.

[53] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, p. 245.

[54] *Chronica xxiv Generalium*, in *Analecta Franciscana* 3 (1897), p. 251.

[55] Alexander of Hales, John of La Rochelle, Robert of La Bassée and Odo Rigaldis who authored *Expositio quattuor magistrorum super Regulam Fratrum Minorum (1241–2)*, ed. Livarius Oliger (Rome, 1950).

[56] Stephen J.P. van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1963), 1, pp. 156–176; 2, pp. 1–15.

[57] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, p. 284.

[58] van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, 2, pp. 205–331.

within the order.[59] Although the introduction of such an ordo could be considered a retrograde move from the viewpoint of the development of liturgical books[60] such an ordo was the least expensive and fastest way to correct the existing books,[61] and proved enormously influential both in alleviating liturgical irregularities amongst the brothers and in providing directions for the celebration of Mass in the Roman Rite for centuries to come. The work of Haymo on the order of Mass also points to the growing clericalization of the order, the multiplication of eucharistic celebrations, and the eventual predominance of private over conventual Mass celebrations, despite the wishes to the contrary of Francis.

After Haymo's death the move toward regularization of the eucharistic liturgy continued. One early concern was a chant book for the Mass; the need was filled by the first Franciscan gradual which appears around 1251.[62] Heavily reliant upon the Gregorian repertoire, the gradual seems to have simplified some chants.[63] More influential was its abandonment of the Beneventan notation found in the *Regula* missal in favor of square notation, on a well spaced four line stave, with texts in a simple and legible hand.[64] While square notation probably developed in late twelfth century France with the Notre Dame School, it was first introduced into central Italy through this gradual. The importance of the simple legibility of what others called *fracigena nota*[65] is stressed in the preface to this gradual, whose first paragraph enjoins the brothers to produce their antiphonaries and graduals according to this new style.[66]

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[59] van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, 1, p. 71.

[60] The ordinary or *ordinarium* was a supplanted by the development of self contained books such as the full missal and breviary. See my "The *Libri ordinarii*: An Introduction," *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 102 (1988), pp. 129–137.

[61] van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, 1, p. 72.

[62] van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, 1, p. 110.

[63] This is the opinion of Lavern John Wagner, "Franciscan Chant as a Late Medieval Expression in the Liturgy," *Essays in Medieval Studies* 5 (1988), pp. 45–57. While he does not focus on the gradual but the Divine Office, Andrew W. Mitchell does not see evidence of this simplification in his "The Chant of the Earliest Franciscan Liturgy" (University of Western Ontario: Ph.D. dissertation, 2003).

[64] The differences between the Beneventan style and that of the new gradual are well illustrated in van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, 2, pp. 112–113.

[65] So named in the *Constitutiones antique* of the Servites (c. 1280), ed. *Monumenta Ordinis Servorum s. Mariae* (Rome, 1897), p. 31 as cited in van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy* 1, p. 115.

[66] "In primes iniungitur fratribus, ut de cetero, tam in gradualibus quam antiphonariis nocturnis et aliis, faciant notam quadratam et quatuor lineas, omnes rubeas sive

A second edition of the Franciscan Missal appeared a few years later (c. 1255). Van Dijk describes this as a faithful reproduction of Haymo's ordinal for the Mass. This version of the Missal, which Bonaventure held up as the standard for correcting all other missals at the Chapter of Narbonne in 1260,[67] deviated from Haymo's work only to the extend that employed a slightly revised version of the older order of Mass known as *Paratus sacerdos*[68] rather than Haymo's *Indutus planeta*.[69]

Divine Office

The Wider Context

We have previously noted wider currents in thirteenth century Western liturgy that were important for emerging Franciscan eucharistic practice. Such were similarly important for early Franciscan practices regarding the Divine Office. For example, the Germanizing influences noted by James Russell contributed to a instinct to multiply external ceremonies regarding the Office. While Benedict's Rule called for the recitation of the 150 Psalms of the Psalter every week,[70] various accretions to the Office so obscured Benedict's modest vision, that some communities were praying 150 psalms in common each day.[71]

A unique development regarding the Divine Office which was to have specific ramifications within the Franciscan Order was the evolution of the obligation for recitation of the office.[72] While monastic rules, like that of Benedict, required monks to attend the recitation

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nigras. Et littera aperte et distincte scribatur, ita quod nota congrue super suam litteram valeat ordinari. Et fiant linee modo debito distantes, ne nota hinc inde comprimatur ab eis." *Preface to the Franciscan Gradual*, ed. van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, 2, p. 361.

[67] "Studeant ministri quod usque ad sequens capitulum generale littera breviariorum et missalium corrigatur secundum examplar verius, quod habere poterunt, secundum ordinis approbatam consuetudinem." Chapter of Narbonne, ed. van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, p. 419.

[68] *Order of the Mass According to the Use of the Roman Church (Court) before 1227*, in van Dijk, *The Ordinal of the Papal Court*, pp. 493–526.

[69] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, p. 338.

[70] Adalbert de Vogüé and Jean Neufville, *La Règle de saint Benoît* (Paris, 1971), p. 103.

[71] See my *The First Ordinary of the Royal Abbey of St.-Denis in France* (Fribourg, 1990), pp. 78–103.

[72] See Pierre Salmon, *The Breviary through the Centuries*, trans. Sister David Mary (Collegeville, 1962), pp. 1–27.

of the hours (chapter 43), they made an exception for those working at a distance who were required to say the appointed hour where they were working (chapter 50). Such was possible for monks who were required to memorize the Psalter before being professed, and who needed no books to fulfill their obligation outside of choir. Eventually this requirement to join in the common recitation of the hours was extended to the secular clergy who, under the influence of the Rule of Chrodegang of Metz,[73] were required to participate in the celebration of all of the hours in their own churches. If they could not attend because of some pastoral reason, such clerics were required to recite the hours in private.[74] By the late thirteenth century canonists argued that clerics could dispense themselves from the choral office for a sound reason, as long as they made up the missed hours in private.[75]

The growing insistence on the personal obligation of monks and clergy to recite all of the hours contributed to the development of the breviary. Collapsing the various books required for common recitation (Psalter, antiphonary, homilary, evangelary, benedictional, etc.) into a single volume already occurred by the eleventh century. Most of these were monastic breviaries, designed for professed monks (many of them clerics) obliged to recite all of the hours of the Divine Office when traveling or away from the choir for other work. Eventually all clerics were required to have breviaries to fulfill this obligation.

A final phenomenon that was important for Franciscan practices regarding the Divine Office was the emergence of the *conversi* in the monasteries of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. While the term was not univocal, in a community like the Cistercians it was used of lay religious to distinguish them from the monks.[76] While monks were not always clerics, it was from the monks that *ordinandi* were chosen, and by the Council of Vienne in 1312, it was decreed that every monk should be ordained (canon 14). Monks were the *litterati* of the monasteries, often joining as *oblati*, and enduring a rigorous

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[73] *The Rule of Saint Chrodegang*, n. 6, in Jerome Bertram, *The Chrodegang rules: the rules for the common life of the secular clergy from the eighth and ninth centuries. Critical texts with translations and commentary* (Burlington, 2005), p. 33.

[74] Salmon, *The Breviary through the Centuries*, p. 10.

[75] Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West* (Collegeville, 1986), p. 300.

[76] Justin Der, "The Origins of Lay Brothers in the Church," *The New Round Table* 37:3 (1984), p. 144.

formation which included the memorization of the psalms and their musical tones. The *conversi* were not presumed to be educated, often joined at a later age, were primarily laborers, who were sometimes barred admission to the chapter of a monastery and denied any role in elections.[77] As a consequence, such *conversi* were usually exempt from the recitation of the Divine Office, and often given a stipulated number of *Pater noster*s (often one for each psalm) and *Gloria Patri*s as a kind of substitute office.

Francis and the Divine Office

As van Dijk has commented, unlike the celebration of Eucharist, the performance of the Divine Office concerned Francis personally.[78] Thus, Francis gave many more directives concerning the celebration of the Office in his writings than the celebration of Mass. It also seems that this was a more contentious issue in the early community than the celebration of Eucharist.

It is probable that Francis first learned to read as a child from the Psalter,[79] as was common practice in the twelfth century. What seems uncommon is that, despite his self-effacing description as "ignorant and stupid,"[80] he possessed great fluency with the psalms, and probably knew them by heart.[81] While the early biographies do not give any specific information about Francis's praying the Office before he began to live with his followers, one can presume that to the extent that he visited churches, attended public worship and even lived with clergy,[82] so did he have the opportunity to share in this prayer as would other laity of the time and as did his early companions.[83] When we do get evidence about Francis's personal practice of the Divine Office, this was so intimately wed to the practices of his brothers, that it is best to describe the two together.

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[77] Der, "The Origins of Lay Brothers in the Church," p. 145.
[78] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, p. 254.
[79] Oktavian Schmucki, "St. Francis's level of Education," trans. Paul Barrett, *Greyfriars Review* 10.2 (1996), pp. 156–157.
[80] *LtOrd* 39, *FAED* 1, p. 119; *Opuscula*, p. 262.
[81] Schmucki, "St. Francis's level of Education," p. 156.
[82] *1C* 9 (*FAED* 1, p. 189; *Fontes*, p. 285.
[83] *L3C* 38 *FAED* 2, p. 9, *Fontes*, pp. 1410–1411.

Early Practice

Celano relates that when the brothers asked Francis to pray "because . . . they did not know the church's office," Francis instructed them to pray the *Pater noster*[84] and his favored acclamation "We adore you,"[85] a popular verse widely employed in the Offices of the day.[86] The early community did not celebrate the Office in any formal way, but did participate from time to time at its celebration in local parishes or monasteries.[87] It is interesting that, although the Worchester Fragment admits that Francis had both cleric and lay followers,[88] it does not make any mention of the Divine Office.

The first priest to join Francis was Sylvester,[89] sometime between 1209 and 1210. He was soon followed by Rufino and Leo. None of these accompanied Francis to Rome in 1209 or 1210 when he received the approval from Innocent for the primitive rule which, in all probability, contained few if any regulations regarding the prayer of the brothers. While Innocent gave Francis and his first followers the tonsure, making them minor clerics,[90] they were not obliged to recite the Divine Office. Francis was ordained deacon sometime before 1223,[91] which would have imposed this obligation, but exactly when that occurred is not clear, and its impact on the community's prayer life is equally ambiguous.

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[84] The significance of this prayer to Francis is not only underscored by its importance in his own prayer and that of his followers, but also by his catechesis on this prayer which "is perhaps the only instance in which we find an example of how Francis responded to his brother's request to teach them how to pray." *FAED* 1, p. 158.

[85] *1C* 45, *FAED* 1, p. 222; *Fontes*, p. 319.

[86] For example, in the early 13th century Ordinary of St.-Denis, it is employed as a versicle at Matins on the feast of the finding of the holy nails; a versicle during Sunday processions to the cross; a versicle for Matins and Sext on the feast of the finding of the Holy Cross; an antiphon and versicle for Matins, Responsory for Lauds, Responsory for the Procession to the cross, and versicle at Sext on the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. See my *The First Ordinary of the Royal abbey of St.-Denis*, pp. 392, 442, 522, 523, 608, 609, 609, 609 and 610 respectively. Earlier it is found as an antiphon for the adoration of the cross on Good Friday in Benevento and other Italian centers. See David Hiley, *Western Plainchant* (Oxford, 1993), p. 527.

[87] See note 69 above.

[88] *1 Frag* 43, *FAED* 1, p. 89; *Opuscula*, p. 303.

[89] *2C* 109, *FAED* 2, p. 319; *Fontes*, pp. 542–543.

[90] *AP* 36, *FAED* 2, p. 51; *Fontes*, p. 1339; *L3C* 52, *FAED* 2, p. 98; *Fontes*, p. 1424; Bonaventure *LMj* 3.10, *FAED* 2, p. 549; *Fontes*, p. 803.

[91] *LSJ* 55, *FAED* 1, p. 406; *Fontes*, p. 1075; *LMj* 7, *FAED* 2, p. 610; *Fontes*, pp. 868–869.

The primitive rule became increasingly inadequate vis-à-vis the community's prayer life, not only because of the priests and more educated followers joining the community,[92] but also because in the years following the first papal approbation the brothers acquired the Portiuncula[93] and other dwellings. Van Dijk, and Schmucki after him, believed these acquisitions contributed to transforming community life from one of total itineracy to a more stable community life in which the celebration of the Divine Office would have been more appropriate.[94]

Rule for Hermitages

Three of the ten sections of this very short Rule, possibly composed between 1217 and 1221, outline requirements for the Divine Office. While providing only a broad sweep of directives and lacking in detail, this Rule nonetheless underscores important developments along key trajectories noted above. Of central importance is the growing acquisition of dwellings among Francis's followers, their contribution to a new stability of communal life, and the role of the Divine Office in establishing a rhythm for the communal life. It is clear that, while not yet a standard for all community life, the Divine Office provides the basic framework for shaping life in early Franciscan hermitages.

This Rule indicates that Compline is to be recited after sunset. The somewhat awkward prescriptions that, after Compline, the brothers "*dicant horas suas*"[95] could be a reference to the praying of Vigils or Nocturns (i.e., the night office), and the directive that the brothers then "rise for Matins,"[96] would then be a reference to morning prayer or Lauds.[97] The *Earlier Rule* will more specifically distinguish between the hours of Matins and Lauds (*pro matutino, pro laudibus*), and recognize the importance of all eight canonical hours.[98] Celano's

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[92] *1C* 57, *FAED* 1, p. 231; *Fontes*, p. 331.
[93] *L3C* 56, *FAED* 2, p. 100; *Fontes*, p. 1427.
[94] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, p. 183; Octavian Schmucki, "Divine Praise and Meditation according to the Teaching and Example of St. Francis of Assisi," *Greyfriars Review* 4.1 (1990), p. 27.
[95] *RH* 3, *FAED* 1, p. 61; *Opuscula*, p. 410.
[96] *RH* 3, *FAED* 1, p. 61; *Opuscula*, p. 410.
[97] Robert Taft, "*Quaestiones disputatae* in the History of the Liturgy of the Hours: the Origins of Nocturns, Matins, Prime," *Worship* 58 (1984), pp. 130–158.
[98] Compline, Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, and Vespers noted in *ER* 3.10, *FAED* 1, p. 66; *Opuscula*, p. 380.

narration that the early community owned a single New Testament for "reading the lessons at Matins"[99] indicates that members of the early community were familiar with the night office of Vigils or Nocturns, distinguished by its many lessons. On the other hand, Francis's own Office of the Passion only includes seven hours,[100] in which he offers a composite image of "Matins-Lauds" which could be prayed either during the night or early in the morning.[101] The ambiguity in the language here is probably indicative of the fluidity of practice among the brothers, who sometimes distinguished Vigils or Nocturns from Lauds, and other times may have treated them as a single prayer time. The recitation of Prime and Terce signaled the end of the period of silence, and inaugurated the time for begging alms.[102] Sext, None and Vespers round out the daily horarium.[103]

This is an idealized image of the role of the Divine Office in the first hermitages, probably not regularly achievable because of the scarcity of books. Celano, reporting about the same period, noted that the brothers at the Portiuncula had no breviary and only a single copy of the New Testament for prayer, which Francis gave away.[104] That the brothers in hermitages would have had the requisite books to fulfill this vision of the Divine Office is unlikely at this time.

The Earlier Rule (1221)

This Rule required all brothers, clerical or lay, to recite the Divine Office,[105] a development which probably occurred in the middle of the previous decade. Here, for the first time, the Office appears as

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[99] *2C* 91, *FAED* 2, p. 306, *Fontes*, pp. 526–527.

[100] *OfP*, *FAED* 1, pp. 140–157, *Opuscula*, pp. 338–351.

[101] Esser comments that the most difficult questions in editing the work are not around the questions of "what" to pray, but especially concern the questions of when and where to pray the individual elements of the Office ("nicht nur bezüglich der Frage, was zu beten ist, sondern ebenso sehr der, wann und wo die einzelnen Stücke zu beten sind"), *Opuscula*, p. 337; also, see the edition of this Office in which Laurent Gallant and André Cirino list the second hour as "Matins-Lauds" which can either be said in the middle of the night or in the early morning," *The Geste of the Great King: The Office of the Passion of Francis of Assisi* (St. Bonaventure, 2001), p. 29.

[102] *RH* 4–5, *FAED* 1, p. 61; *Opuscula*, pp. 409–410.

[103] *RH* 6, *FAED* 1, p. 61; *Opuscula*, p. 410.

[104] *2C* 91, *FAED* 2, p. 306; *Fontes*, pp. 526–527, also *AC* 93, *FAED* 2, p. 196; *Fontes*, p. 1618.

[105] *ER* 3.3, *FAED* 1, p. 65; *Opuscula*, p. 379.

a constituent part of community life. This Rule clearly distinguishes three types of brothers, and defines the recitation of the Office for each. Clerical brothers are to recite the Office "according to the custom of clerics,"[106] indicating that they are not to follow the Benedictine cursus but that that of the local diocese in which they find themselves. This allowed some diversity among the cleric brothers as they moved about, though in Assisi the local usage was that of the papal curia, as bishop Guido II of Assisi was known to have adopted the curial practice at his cathedral of San Rufino.[107] The *Earlier Rule* indicates that clerics are to recite the Office "for the living and the dead," suggesting not only the importance of remembering the dead in the praying of the Office, but also apparently required the brothers to recite the Office of the Dead along with the canonical hours. This office of Lauds, Vespers and Vigils, which appeared in the late eighth century,[108] was an obligatory part of the monastic cursus by the tenth century, and became widespread among secular clergy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; Francis's own breviary contained an Office for the Dead[109] as did the *Regula* breviary.[110] In addition to these offices, this Rule prescribes Ps. 50 (*Miserere mei Deus*) with a *Pater noster* "for the failings and negligence of the brothers," and Ps. 129 (*De profundis*) and a *Pater noster* for the deceased brothers.[111] These are two of the penitential psalms[112] which were commonly recited by monks after Prime,[113] which the brothers would have experienced if ever attending prayer with the Benedictine monks on Mt. Subasio. Finally, the Rule allows clerics to have "the books necessary to fulfill their office."[114]

This Rule gives very little direction for the second group, literate lay brothers, who are instructed to read and allowed to have a

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[106] *ER* 3:4, *FAED* 1, p. 65; *Opuscula*, p. 379.

[107] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, p. 140.

[108] See Damien Sicard, *La Liturgie de la mort dans l'église des origines à la réforme carolingienne* (Münster, 1978).

[109] Stephen J.P. van Dijk, "The Breviary of St. Francis," *Franciscan Studies* 9 (1949), pp. 13–40; also, Pietro Messa, "L'Officium mortuorum e l'Officium beate Marie virginis nel Breviarium sancti Francisci," *Franciscana* 4 (2002), pp. 111–149.

[110] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, p. 218.

[111] *ER* 3:5–6, *FAED* 1, p. 65; *Opuscula*, pp. 379–380.

[112] The others are Ps 6 (*Domine ne in furore*), Ps 31 (*Beati quorum*), Ps 37 (*Domine ne in furore*). Ps 101 (*Domine exaudi orationem*), and Ps 142 (*Domine exaudi orationem*).

[113] See my *The First Ordinary of the Royal Abbey of St.-Denis*, pp. 101–103.

[114] *ER* 3:7, *FAED* 1, p. 65; *Opuscula*, p. 380.

Psalter.[115] While there is no other information for how these brothers were to perform the Office, Schmucki surmises that these brothers would have taken an active part in the recitation of the psalms with the cleric brothers, and listened to the other parts of the office. He also credibly suggests that they joined the clerics in reciting Pss. 50 and 129.[116]

The third group, illiterate lay brothers, were provided a somewhat detailed substitute Office, requiring the recitation of the *Credo*, the *Gloria Patri* and a stipulated number of *Pater noster*s for each of the canonical hours.[117] They are further provided clear substitutes for Ps. 50 for the deceased brothers (seven *Pater noster*s plus the versicle *Requiem aeternam*), and substitutes for Ps. 129 (three *Pater noster*s) for the failings of the brothers.[118] Directives for allowing the substitution of *Pater noster*s already exist in the ninth century; a model for substituting seven *Pater noster*s for each hour appears at Cluny in the eleventh century.[119] A more immediate influence was probably the practice of the Humiliati Tertiaries, approved by Innocent III in 1201,[120] whose substitute office also generally comprised seven *Pater noster*s, required daily prayers for the living and dead of the fraternity, and Ps. 50 for the soul of every dead brother.[121]

The Office of the Passion

By the thirteenth century there were a plethora of votive offices recited by monks and increasingly by secular clergy in addition to the eight canonical hours. The previously discussed Office of the Dead was one of the most widely known, as was the Office of All Saints, commonly used in the monasteries of the West since the ninth

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[115] *ER* 3:8, *FAED* 1, p. 65; *Opuscula*, p. 380.
[116] Schmucki, "Divine Praise and Meditation," p. 31.
[117] *ER* 3:10, *FAED* 1, p. 66; *Opuscula*, p. 380.
[118] *ER* 3:10, *FAED* 1, p. 66; *Opuscula*, p. 380.
[119] *Bibliotheca Cluniacensis*, ed. Martinus Marrier and Andreas Quercatenus (Paris, 1614; reprint Mâcon: 1915), 2, pp. 672.
[120] See Brenda Bolton, "Innocent III and the *Humiliati*," in *Innocent III: Vicar of Christ or Lord of the World?* ed. James Powell, 2nd ed. (Washington DC, 1994), pp. 114–120.
[121] Innocent III, *Incumbit Nobis* (7 June 1201) in Robert M. Stewart, *'De illis qui faciunt penitentiam': The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order: Origins, Development, Interpretation* (Rome, 1991), pp. 365–371.

century.[122] Besides these, however, there developed numerous others including the Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Holy Cross, Holy Trinity, Incarnation and Holy Ghost.[123] Most imitated the structure of the Office of the Dead, comprising a limited number of abbreviated hours (at least Lauds and Vespers), originally said as a private devotion, but increasingly mandated for public, communal recitation.

While broadly in this tradition, Francis's *Office of the Passion* [124] is a unique work that does not closely follow any previous pattern. According to Gallant and Cirino, this Office was not composed by Francis as much as it evolved over many years, a series of disparate elements that gradually came together creating this "unique form of prayer."[125] Rooted in Francis's profound devotion to the whole of the paschal mystery whose center point was the cross,[126] and demonstrating his broad scriptural memory and special facility with the psalms, the office is comprised of seven hours. Each hour begins with a *Pater noster*[127] followed by "The Praises To Be Said at All the Hours" and its prayer,[128] and an antiphon honoring Mary. Then followed the psalms. The introduction indicates that Francis would say the "Psalms of Saint Mary[129] . . . the other psalms he had chosen

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[122] See my *The First Ordinary of the Royal Abbey of St.-Denis*, pp. 90–93; on historical antecedents for the Office of the Passion, see Octavian Schmucki, "The Passion of Christ in the Life of St. Francis of Assisi," trans. Ignatius McCormick, *Greyfriars Review* 4 supplement (n.d.), pp. 25–26.

[123] Edmund Bishop, *Liturgica Historica* (Oxford, 1960 [1908]), p. 224.

[124] The critical edition is by Laurent Gallant, *Dominus regnavit a ligno. L'Officium Passionis de saint François d'Assise, édition critique et étude* (Institut Catholique de Paris: thèse, 1978).

[125] Gallant and Cirino, *The Geste of the Great King*, 194; also, see Dominique Gagnan, "Office de la Passion, prière quotidienne de Saint François d'Assise," *Antonianum* 55 (1980), pp. 3–86.

[126] H. Felder, *Die Ideale des hl. Franziskus von Assisi* (Paderborn, 1951), pp. 401–402, as cited in Esser, *Opuscula*, p. 322.

[127] Although the introduction to the text gives the incipit as *Sanctissime pater noster* etc., *FAED* 1, p. 139; *Opuscula*, p. 338, which is Francis's Prayer inspired by the Our Father, *FAED* 1, pp. 158–159, *Opuscula*, pp. 292–293; Gallant and Cirino only speak of Francis praying the "Our Father" at the beginning of each hour, *The Geste of the Great King*, p. 28.

[128] *PrsH (The Praises To Be Said at All the Hours), FAED* 1, p. 161–162; *Opuscula*, pp. 319–320.

[129] This could be a reference to votive office of the Blessed Virgin, which was in the Breviary of St. Francis. See Messa, "L'Officium mortuorum e l'Officium beate Marie virginis nel Breviarium sancti Francisci," pp. 111–149. Also, Bonaventure indicates that this is part of the daily cursus in his *Reg nov* 1.2 (8.476a).

[and] the psalms of the Passion."[130] Included in the text itself, however, is only a single "psalm" for each hour, each of which was a kind of psalmic catena, combining verses from different psalms into a single unit. Then followed a short doxology,[131] also comprised of disparate scriptural passages.

The Office is divided into five parts: 1) Triduum and weekdays through the year, 2) the Easter season, 3) Sundays and principal feasts, 4) Advent, and 5) Christmas and Epiphany. The most complete section is the first, in which five of the hours broadly relate to a particular episodes of Christ's passion, death and resurrection: 1) Compline, the prayer and arrest in Gethsemani; 2) Matins, the trial before the Sanhedrin; 3) Terce, the appearance before Pilate; 4) Sext, the agony and suffering; 5) None, the Crucifixion."[132] Prime appears as a morning interlude, celebrating the morning sun as a symbol of Resurrection,[133] and Vespers as an acclamation of Christ's victory.[134]

It is clear that this Office was part of Francis's prayer pattern, that it was handed on to his followers, and that some prayed it faithfully.[135] There is no evidence that it was widely employed, however, and according to Gallant and Crino seems to have relatively quickly fallen almost completely into disuse. One possible explanation for this was Bonaventure's composition of a similar office.[136] His work was designed more formally along the pattern of offices of the day, equivalent to what we might call a "common of the Passion." Because of this more traditional form, Bonaventure's office could have contributed to the eclipse of Francis's rather unique shape for his Office of the Passion.[137]

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[130] *OfP, FAED* 1, p. 139; *Opuscula*, p. 338.

[131] This is not technically an oration or "prayer" (despite the label in *FAED* 1, p. 141) as it is not addressed to God, but speaks of God only in the third person.

[132] Gallant and Cirino, *The Geste of the Great King*, 198; alternate interpretations are offered in *FAED* 1, pp. 140–147.

[133] Gallant and Cirino, *The Geste of the Great King*, p. 245.

[134] Gallant and Cirino, *The Geste of the Great King*, p. 281.

[135] The most explicit early evidence is that St. Clare knew and recited this office. *The Legend of St. Clare* 30 in Regis Armstrong, *The Lady, Clare of Assisi: Early Documents* (New York, 2006), p. 307.

[136] *Officium de Passione Domini*, (8.152a–158b).

[137] Gallant and Cirino, *The Geste of the Great King*, p. 14.

The Later Rule (1223)

This first Franciscan rule to receive a papal seal, demonstrated a degree of canonical precision missing from that of 1221. Whereas, for example, the *Earlier Rule* distinguished between three groups of brothers (clerics, literate lay brothers, and illiterate lay brothers), this rule accepts the standard distinctions of the day[138] and only differentiates between the clerical and the lay brothers when it comes to celebrating the Divine Office. The directions for each are succinct and more precise. The clerical brothers are now to recite the Office according to the rite of the Roman Church,[139] which meant that all clerical brothers were to pray according to the curial ordo established under Innocent III. The one exception was the design of the Psalter: whereas Rome followed a Latin translation of the Psalter known as the "Roman Psalter" (wrongly attributed to St. Jerome), most Christians in the west used Jerome's second translation of the psalms, promoted by Gregory of Tours in the 6th century in the churches of Gaul, and subsequently labeled the "Gallican Psalter."[140] Despite the fact that the Roman ordo for the Divine Office had been adopted in Assisi early in the thirteenth century,[141] this apparently did not include the use of the Roman Psalter.[142] Thus, Francis adopted the practice most familiar to himself and the vast majority of the clerics who joined him. He also granted permission for the clerical brothers to have breviaries, a great concession given his vision of poverty, but a necessary exemption given the more precise canonical perspective of the later rule.[143] The permission for breviaries was symbolic of the future clericalization of the order and a source of consternation.

The lay brothers are instructed to substitute *Pater noster*s for the various hours,[144] similar to that in the *Earlier Rule*. While lay and

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[138] E.g., Decretum Gratiani, *Concordia Discordantium Canonum ac primum de iure nature et constitutionis*, distinctio 20, can. 1, *et passim* in *Corpus iuris canonici*, ed. Aemilius Friedberg (Leipzig, 1879), p. 66; on the requirement of all clerics to say the canonical hours, see Thomas Aquinas' *Quodlibet* VI, q. 5, art. 8.

[139] *LR* 3.1, *FAED* 1, p. 101; *Opuscula*, p. 367.

[140] For a recent edition of this Psalter, see Robert Weber, *Psalterii secundum Vulgatam bibliorum versionem nova recensio* (Clervaux, 1961).

[141] See n. 93 above.

[142] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, p. 207.

[143] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, pp. 207–11.

[144] *LR* 3.3, *FAED* 1, p. 101; *Opuscula*, p. 368.

clerical brothers are instructed to pray for the dead,[145] specifics prescriptions for an additional Psalm and *Pater noster* for the deceased brothers, as well as the additional Psalm and *Pater noster* for the failings of the brothers—both in present in the *Earlier Rule*—have been eliminated.

Developments after 1223

The more canonically precise *Rule of 1223* or *Later Rule* was a source of serious disagreement on matters liturgical and stirred resistance from various quarters. It moved the community closer to establishing a choir office among some of the brothers, contributed to a clerical divide in the prayer, and in worship created two unequal classes of brothers. Specific disagreements were the result of significant changes from earlier practices embedded in the *Rule of 1221*, which required unwelcome adaptations by many of the brothers: clerics in minor orders, previously not bound to the Office were now obligated to pray it; clerics who did not know Latin now had to learn to fulfill this obligation; and literate lay brothers had to give up their Psalters and turn to the substitute form of office designed for the illiterate brothers.[146]

Francis responded to the brothers' criticisms in his *Letter to the Entire Order*, which was largely concerned with matters liturgical. This letter, which may have been prompted in part by the decree of Honorius in 1224 which gave the brothers permission to celebrate Mass and the Divine Office in their own places and oratories,[147] outlines some of Francis's concerns about unworthy celebrations of the Eucharist. In regard to the Office he is unwavering in his intention that the *Rule of 1223* is to be "observed inviolably by everyone," and insists that the clerics are to say the Office with devotion and emphasizing harmony,[148] a telling request in the midst of liturgical discord. Finally, after confessing his own failings committing himself to observe the prescriptions of the Rule regarding the Office, Francis declares those who do not observe these things are neither catholic nor his brothers.[149]

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[145] *LR* 3.4, *FAED* 1, p. 101; *Opuscula*, p. 368.
[146] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, p. 258.
[147] *FAED* 1, p. 116; see note 46 above.
[148] *LtOrd* 40–41, *FAED* 1, p. 119; *Opuscula*, p. 262.
[149] *LtOrd* 43–44, *FAED* 1, p. 120; *Opuscula*, pp. 262–263.

That such concerns were not resolved in Francis's lifetime is apparent in his final *Testament*. While reaffirming his reverence for priests and the Eucharist, Francis seems much more concerned about the celebration of the Divine Office. After reiterating the distinctions of the *Rule of 1223* prescribing two forms of the Office, one for clerics and the other for lay brothers,[150] Francis uses the strongest language concerning the brothers being bound to recite the Office according to the rule, and then describes in some detail how any who violate this portion of the rule are to be brought before the Cardinal protector of the Order.[151]

After Francis's death public worship remained a source of tension in the Order. Similar to its action regarding the celebration of the Eucharist, the Chapter of Assisi in 1230 approved a prototype Franciscan Breviary or *Regula* breviary,[152] which van Dijk believes was compiled before July 1228.[153] The production of a Franciscan breviary (fully rubricated, noted with Gregorian repertoire in Beneventan notation) five years after the *Rule of 1223* did little to quell the disagreements about the celebration of the Office.

It was again Haymo of Faversham who offered a systematic and enduring response regarding the performance of the Office. Aided by the work of the Four Masters of the University,[154] who had noted both abuses, unauthorized changes and inherent problems with the prescriptions of the *Rule of 1223* as well as the unsuitability of the *Regula* breviary for practical use, Haymo produced an *Ordo Breviarii* in 1243/4.[155] This was not a new breviary, but a complete, orderly and concise set of rubrics. This ingenious approach provided a uniform direction for the brothers in reciting the offices, despite the fact that the books they employed may have been produced at different times, from different scriptoria, were both noted and unnoted, and contained differing materials. Haymo's *Ordo* also incorporated a series of privileges granted by Gregory IX to the brothers, which further

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[150] *Test* 18, *FAED* 1, p. 125, *Opuscula*, p. 440.

[151] *Test* 30–33, *FAED* 1, pp. 126–127; *Opuscula*, pp. 442–443.

[152] While the *exemplar typicum* is lost, fifteen manuscripts (not all reliant upon a single manuscript) allow for a clear image of its content; see van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, pp. 215–232; also his "An Official Copy of the Franciscan 'Regula Breviary,'" *Scriptorium* 16 (1962), pp. 68–76.

[153] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, p. 229.

[154] See note 55 above.

[155] van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, 1, pp. 177–208; 2, pp. 15–195.

abbreviated the recitation of the office.[156] While Haymo's *Ordo* did not answer every objection, he did offer a new clarity of vision and practice that not only contributed to the growing uniformity of Franciscan practice, but to that of all clerics who followed the Roman rite. Furthermore, his emphasis on education and support for the growing clericalization of the order significantly contributed to the acceptance of his *Ordo* and the vision embedded in the *Rule of 1223*.

After Haymo's death, the brothers continued to produce basic resources for the celebration of the Divine Office. Often these books had the dual purpose of filling a gap in the community's liturgical library as well as offering a more uniform vision for the way the brother's prayed the Office. The latter was necessitated by the poverty of books available to the brothers, produced at different times, originating in diverse areas and sharing varying degrees of similarity. This fluid situation produced unusual books, such as the "capitulary" of c. 1251. While a capitulary would ordinarily contain the readings for the day hours of the office,[157] this hybrid also contained Haymo's complete *Ordo Breviarii* with the collects and *capitula* rendered in full, a tonary for chanting the various elements of the Office, and a calendar.[158] Calendars were included also in the *Regula* breviary and *Regula* missal, yet while both listed the feast of St. Francis, they otherwise followed the calendars of the papal court. There was no real companion calendar to Haymo's ordinals,[159] and thus there would have been significant disparity between the sanctoral cycles he outlined, and the accompanying calendars. It was only in c. 1260 that this disparity was addressed with the production of a revised calendar promulgated at the chapter of Narbonne.[160] A similar evolution marks the martyrology. Ordinarily read during the monastic chapter, announcing the coming feast,[161] the ordinal of Innocent places it after Prime,[162] as does Haymo.[163] While the chapters of Pisa in 1263 and Paris in 1266 prescribed that the martyrology or *datarium*

[156] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, pp. 264–278.
[157] A.G. Martimort, *Les lectures liturgiques et leurs livres* (Turnhout, 1992), p. 74.
[158] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, pp. 323–324.
[159] van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, 1, p. 123.
[160] van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, 1, pp. 129–130.
[161] Jacques Dubois, *Les martyrologes du Moyen Âge Latin* (Turnhout, 1978), p. 14.
[162] van Dijk, *The Ordinal of the Papal Court*, p. 95.
[163] van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Liturgy*, 2, p. 51.

is to be read after prime, and that each house is to have one,[164] those few that the brothers possessed contained few if any Franciscan saints—sometimes not even Francis—and would have provided little motivation for Franciscans to include when reciting the Office.[165]

Conclusion

From a liturgical perspective, it is notable that while early Franciscanism was a spiritual movement that showed little concern for anything like a daily horarium or approved cursus of prayer, very quickly it became a major force in the thirteenth century for shaping the central prayer forms of the Roman Rite. In some ways, this development uniquely revealed a tension between the commitment of Francis and his followers to both poverty and obedience. Their love of poverty and simplicity led them to prayer styles that required no books, no buildings, no liturgical artifacts and little learning. A spontaneous prayer, a *Pater noster* and a new composition fueled such prayer born of sister poverty. Yet, Francis's commitment in obedience to the Roman church, symbolized in the tonsure of the first followers during their trip to Rome, was an inevitable path toward the clericalization of the community and the subsequent clericalization of their shared worship. Much of this was a direct result of the dominant vision of the hierarchical church at this time, and its parallel tendency to define Franciscans and other new forms of religious life through already existing organizational forms in the church.[166]

Furthermore, despite the fact that Franciscan liturgical patterns are well understood as both reactions to and rejections of the burden of monastic prayer, particularly the bloated form of the Divine Office of this period, the emerging Franciscan cursus quickly begins to manifest tendencies toward monasticization. Thus, despite the previously noted concerns for the abbreviation of the office and its accompanying litanies and suffrages, the Franciscan prayer pattern of the mid-thirteenth century demonstrates that many accretions had returned. Notable in this regard is Bonaventure's *Regula Novitiorum*

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[164] N. 8 and n. 1 respectively in van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Liturgy*, p. 423 and 439.

[165] van Dijk, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, p. 337.

[166] Manselli, "St. Bonaventure and the Clericalization of the Friars Minor," p. 87.

which instructs that each day novices should prayer 100 *Pater noster*s, 100 *Ave Maria*s, the penitential psalms and their litanies.[167] Thus, while there is little doubt that early Franciscanism had a simpler, more humble vision of public prayer that was intended to contribute to the unity of the brotherhood and build up the church, that vision was significantly modified as structures evolved to organize this rapidly growing community. While developments certainly continued after the thirteenth century, the basic trajectories were in place by the death of Haymo of Faversham who, in many respects, could be considered a key architect in the evolution of Franciscan liturgy, and in the process "changed the course of western public worship."[168]

[167] *Reg nov* 2.5 (8.478a).
[168] van Dijk, *Sources of the Modern Roman Liturgy*, 1, p. 39.

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE HEART: PEDAGOGIES OF PRAYER IN MEDIEVAL FRANCISCAN WORKS OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

Bert Roest

> Ipsi tamen conservabant sanctitatem eius cum continua oratione die noctuque et continuo silentio [They nurtured its holiness with continuous prayer day and night, and continuous silence].[1]

These words from the *Compilatio Assisiensis* refer to an aspect of early Franciscan life that easily gets forgotten by historians carried away by the astounding development of the Franciscan order as a major pastoral taskforce in the Church and a strong player in the late medieval landscape of higher education. The Franciscan order was indeed heavily involved in these matters. Yet from the outset it was also an order with a strong contemplative streak, and with a spirituality imbued by the spirit of prayer.

To emphasize this aspect of the Minorite vocation, the present essay intends to chart how, in the course of the medieval period, prayer continued to be an intrinsic element in Franciscan works of religious instruction. It shows that, through these works of religious instruction, which built both on early Franciscan religious experimentation and on older monastic traditions, Franciscan educators were able to inform novices, professed friars and interested fellow travelers about the properties and techniques of prayer, and its proper performance in relation to other relevant activities within their chosen form of religious life.

Prayer in the Early Franciscan Movement

Medieval *vitae* devoted to Francis and his early companions reveal that they only opted for the pastoral route after long deliberation. During their return journey from Rome in 1209, where Francis and his small group had obtained papal approval for their *forma vitae* from

[1] *Scripta Leonis, Rufini et Angeli*, ed. Rosalind B. Brooke (Oxford, 1970), pp. 102–104.

Innocent III, the young fraternity discussed whether it should embrace the contemplative eremitical life, or instead pursue its apostolic mission. It was the latter option that won out, as this was a life for others.[2] Nevertheless, Francis continued to be afflicted by doubts concerning this choice, which he was unable to resolve for himself. If we can believe the hagiographical sources, Francis was so troubled by indecision, that he sent friars to Sylvester and to Clare of Assisi, both of whom were renowned for the quality of their contemplative life, to ask for their prayer and for a response from God. Their answer, so the story goes, was unanimous: it was God's will that Francis went out to preach.[3]

Momentous as this choice may have been for the order's future, indeed for medieval society at large, it did not by any means imply the abandonment of contemplation and prayer. In fact, it would seem that the early friars were very successful in encapsulating these activities as constitutive and restorative elements in their religious vocation.

According to Jacques de Vitry's testimony, dating from 1216, the friars visited villages and houses in the daytime to preach penance, to return in the evening to lonely places for prayer and contemplation. Ten years later, in 1226, when Francis was asked to describe his ideal friary; he described a modest compound, closed off by a ditch and a hedge. Within this compound, he envisaged small dwellings of earth and wood, as well as a few cells where brothers could pray and work undisturbed, away from useless chatter. In the midst of these simple dwellings and cells he pictured a simple church, where the friars could gather for Mass and for the celebration of the Divine Office.[4] This vision of the ideal friary is reminiscent of the hermit

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[2] *1C* 35, *FAED* 1, p. 214; *Fontes*, pp. 309–310.

[3] *LMj* 12:1–2, *FAED* 2, pp. 622–624; *Fontes*, pp. 879–880. See on this Martino Conti, "Eremo ed evangelizzazione nella vita dei francescani", in *Lettura Spirituale-Apostolica delle Fonti Francescani*, ed. G. Cardaropoli & Martino Conti, Pubblicazioni dell'Istituto Apostolico Pontifica Università Antonianum (Rome, 1980), pp. 75–102.

[4] Kajetan Esser, "Die Regula pro eremitoriis data des heiligen Franziskus von Assisi," *Franziskanische Studien* 44 (1962), pp. 383–417 refers in this regard to some information found in the *Speculum Perfectionis*, 10, *Fontes*, pp. 1866–1867: "Deinde, accepta benedictione ab episcopo, vadant et faciant mitti magnam carbonariam in circuitu terrae quam pro loci aedificatione acceperunt, et ponant ibi bonam sepem pro muro in signum paupertatis et humilitatis. Postea faciant fieri domos pauperculos ex luto et lignis et aliquae cellulas, in quibus fratres aliquando possint orare et laborare pro maiori honestate et vitanda otiositate. Ecclesias etiam parvas fieri faciant; non enim debent facere fieri magnas ecclesias causa praedicandi populo . . ." For the English, see *2MP*, *FAED* 3, p. 264.

communities that Francis would have encountered in central Italy during his early wanderings. This model also fits the description of the Franciscan Portiuncula settlement during Francis's lifetime. This too consisted of a simple church, circled by little huts situated against the compound fence.[5] Thus the friars could spend a lot of their time in communal and solitary prayer.

The hagiographic sources relate that, at regular intervals, Francis exchanged his pastoral mission for prolonged fasting and prayer sessions, privileging certain feast days and fasting periods in the liturgical year, such as St. Michael's Day, Assumption, Saint Peter & Paul, Christmas, and Easter. He also engaged in ascetical retreat during the time following Epiphany, and on many Fridays, in memory of Christ's passion. Through these periodic retreats, which coupled prayer and meditation with a severe fasting regime, Francis hoped to enact the contemplative aspects of the Gospel life and to humble himself before God. Spiritually replenished by these experiences, he then felt able to resume his apostolate.[6] Whether in spiritual retreat or on the road, prayer was never absent. Indeed, according to Thomas of Celano's *Vita Prima Sancti Francisci*, it infused every moment of Francis's life.[7]

The Franciscan life of prayer in those early years is not just traceable in the hagiographical sources, including Celano's *Vita Secunda* and Bonaventure's *Legenda Major*.[8] As modern scholars point out, prayer, its methods and its goals, are very present in Francis's own writings, several of which can be seen as an outflow of his ongoing engagement in prayer.[9] Hence, Francis's *Oratio Ante Crucifixum Dicta*,

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[5] Cf. the description of the meditative life in *2C* 18–19, *FAED* 2, pp. 256–258; *Fontes*, pp. 460–462.

[6] *2MP* 65, *FAED* 3, pp. 308–309; *Fontes*, pp. 1950–1952.

[7] ". . . Nam eius tutissimus portus erat oratio, non unius exsistens momenti, vacuave aut praesumptuosa, sed longa tempore, plena devotione, humilitate placida: si sero incipiebat, vix mane finiebat; ambulans, sedens, comedens et bibens, orationi erat intentus. . . ." *1C* 71, *Fontes*, p. 347; *FAED* 1, p. 244.

[8] *2C* 94–101 (De studio orationis sancti Francisci), *Fontes*, pp. 529–535 and *FAED* 2, pp. 308–314; *LMj* 10 (De studio et virtute orationis), *Fontes*, pp. 862–869 and *FAED* 2, pp. 605–611.

[9] Octaviano Schmucki, "Secretum solitudinis; Mentis silentium. Il programma contemplativo nell'Ordine francescano primitivo," *Laurentianum* 14 (1973), pp. 177–222; idem, "Die Stellung Christi im Beten des hl. Franziskus von Assisi," *Wissenschaft und Weisheit* 25 (1962), pp. 128–145; idem, "Franciscus 'Dei laudator et cultor. De orationis vi ac frequentia in eius cum scriptis tum rebus gestis," *Laurentianum* 10 (1969), pp. 3–36, pp. 173–215, pp. 245–282; idem, "La meditazione francescana," *Italia*

the surviving Latin version of which probably is a copy from an Umbrian vernacular original, might go back to Francis's early meditations in front of the crucifix found in the San Damiano chapel. With all its emotionality and particular susceptibility towards the crucified Christ, it does have much in common with older medieval crucifix prayers, forming therewith a culmination point in this meditative legacy.[10]

Among Francis's prayer texts, the *Expositio in Pater Noster* is both a prayer in itself and a contemplation on the prayer of prayers in the Christian tradition.[11] The *Exhortatio ad Laudem Dei*,[12] the *Salutatio Beatae Mariae Virginis*,[13] and the *Salutatio Virtutum*[14] in their turn all have very much a laudatory character, not unlike the poetic invocations and celebrations that we find in thirteenth-century Franciscan religious lyrics (starting with Francis's own *Cantico delle Creature*).

Likewise, the importance of prayer within the Franciscan brotherhood shines through in the writings of Francis's early companions, notably the compilers of the *Legenda Trium Sociorum* and Giles of Assisi.

Francescana 48 (1973), pp. 75–89; idem, "La preghiera francescana," in *La nostra vita di preghiera. Supplemento agli Atti dei Frati Minori Cappuccini della Provincia di S. Carlo in Lombardia* 14 (1974), pp. 107–121; F.X. Toppi, "De spiritu orationis et praxi orationis sancti Patris nostri Francisci," *Analecta OFMCap.* 89 (1973), pp. 39–55; Optatus van Asseldonk, "De traditione vitae orationis in Ordine nostro," *Analecta OFMCap.* 89 (1973), pp. 55–87; Leonhard Lehmann, *Franziskus Meister des Gebets: Kommentar zu den Gebeten des heiligen Franz von Assisi*, Bücher Franziskanischer Geistigkeit, 32 (Werl, 1989).

[10] Cf. Kajetan Esser, "Das Gebet des hl. Franziskus vor dem Kreuzbild in San Damiano," *Franziskanische Studien* 34 (1952), pp. 1–11; Théophile Desbonnets, "Un témoin de la liturgie franciscaine primitive, Meaux B.M. 3," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 63 (1970), p. 456.

[11] *Expositio in Pater Noster*, *FAED* 1, 158–160; *Fontes*, pp. 113–116. As said before, the ascription to Francis is not fully secured. See on the authenticity and characteristics of the text especially, Kajetan Esser, "Die dem hl. Franziskus von Assisi zugeschriebene *Expositio in Pater noster*," *Collectanea Franciscana* 40 (1970), pp. 241–271, reprinted in idem, *Studien zu den Opuscula des hl. Franziskus von Assisi* (Rome, 1973), pp. 225–257; J. Cambell, "Saint François a-t-il composé une paraphrase du Pater?," *Franziskanische Studien* 45 (1963), pp. 338–342; Giuseppe Scarpat, *Il Padrenostro di San Francesco*, Antichità classica e cristiana, 33 (Brescia, 2000).

[12] *Exhortatio ad Laudem Dei*, *FAED* 1, in *Opuscula*, pp. 154–156. Cf. Kajetan Esser, "Exhortatio ad laudem Dei, ein wenig beachtetes Loblied des hl. Franziskus," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 67 (1974), pp. 3–17.

[13] *Salutatio Beatae Mariae Virginis*, *FAED* 1, p. 138; *Fontes*, pp. 217–219. This work is also an early example of Franciscan Marian piety. See F. di Ciacca, "Il 'Saluto alla vergine' e la pietà mariana di Francesco d'Assisi," *Studi Francescani* 79 (1982), pp. 55–64; Lorenzo Ago, "La questione critica intorno alla 'Salutatio Beatae Mariae Virginis' di San Francesco di Assisi," *Antonianum* 73 (1998), pp. 255–303.

[14] *Salutatio Virtutum*, *FAED* 1, pp. 164–165; *Fontes*, pp. 221–224.

The first relate in the *Legenda* that the members of the early brotherhood '. . . took great care to pray on a daily basis and to work with their hands. In order to flee from all idleness, that enemy of the soul, they used to get up in the middle of the night, praying devoutly with many tears and sighs.'[15] Giles of Assisi's *Dicta* thereafter describe prayer as the beginning and the end of everything worth pursuing. Prayer shows the soul what is worth yearning after. Hence it is the road towards the knowledge of God. It should be undertaken with patience and endurance, and not in the expectance of immediate spiritual reward. It is the crown of the Christian life, even more important than the works of charity.[16] The *Dicta* elaborate on this by listing no less than fourteen graces and virtues resulting from perseverance in prayer. Together, these virtues and graces bring true love, happiness, peace of mind, and eventually the state of glory that will empower the soul to feed itself properly with the word of God.[17]

All this evidence should suffice to support the thesis that prayer constituted one of the core tenets of the early Franciscan life of evangelical perfection. As such, it found a place in some of the order's foundational texts of religious instruction: in the *Regula non Bullata* of 1221, in Francis's *Regula pro Eremitoriis Data*, but also, albeit more concise, in the *Regula Bullata* of 1223. Alongside of the hagiographical texts, meant for the edification of the community of friars, these normative texts situate the importance of prayer within the regulated existence of the fraternity, insisting that, whatever the friars may have to do, it should not extinguish the 'spirit of holy prayer and devotion.' For ultimately, all 'worldly' activities (begging, handicrafts, teaching and probably even preaching) had to be subservient to it.[18]

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[15] "Solliciti erant cotidie orare et laborare manibus suis, ut omnem otiositatem, animam inimicam, a se penitus effugarent, surgentes in media nocte solliciti orantesque devote cum multis lacrimis et suspiriis." *Legenda Trium Sociorum* 41; *Fontes*, pp. 1414–1415; *FAED* 2, p. 93.

[16] *Dicta Beati Aegidii Assisiensis*, Bibliotheca Franciscana Ascetica Medii Aevi (Ad Claras Aquas, 1905 & 1939), pp. 41–47. (Dictum XII: *De oratione et eius effectu*). *Dictum* XXIII (*De perseverantia in oratione*), ibid., pp. 70–71 adds to Dictum XII by emphasising that "Religiosi vocati sunt a Deo maxime ad vacandum orationi, humilitati et fraternae caritati . . ."

[17] Dictum XXIV: *De gratiis et virtutibus, quae acquiruntur in oratione*, ibid, pp. 72–74.

[18] All this is contained concisely at the beginning of chapter five of the *Regula Bullata*: "Fratres illi, quibus gratiam dedit laborandi, laborent fideliter et devote, ita quod, excluso otio animae inimico, sanctae orationis et devotionis spiritum non exstinguant, cui debent cetera temporalia deservire." *Fontes*, p. 175; *FAED* 1, p. 102.

After ca. 1230, due to the order's orientation towards higher learning and pastoral professionalization, which was accompanied by changing recruitment practices and the change from small *romitori* to larger convents near and in town, the Franciscan contemplative tradition became less pronounced. The early constitutions (the pre-Narbonne fragments of 1239 and the Narbonne constitutions of 1260) still mention the existence of eremitic dwellings where friars could go for periods of contemplative retreat.[19] Yet by the 1250s, many clerical friars had begun to see eremitical retreat as a useless activity of idleness. The chronicler Salimbene of Parma even insinuated that friars retreating into hermitical reclusion: 'erant inutiles ad confessiones audiendas et ad consilia danda' ('were useless for hearing confession and giving counsel').[20]

Salimbene looked upon eremitical retreat as a luxury. More positively, this was also the opinion of other clerical friars, who limited their eremitical retreat to moments of leisure, during which they could focus on matters that needed free time; a luxury they normally could not afford. Hence, Bonaventure of Bagnoregio retreated to La Verna, the famous mountain where Francis would have received the stigmata, to write the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*. That inspired (and ideologically charged) hermitage setting allowed the minister general to reach a state of meditative quietness necessary to compose a work of lasting spiritual value.[21]

The Place of Prayer in Franciscan Novice Training Treatises

For friars like Bonaventure, eremitical retreat had become the exception. Not surprisingly, many hermitages and *carceri/romitori* associated with the life of Francis and his early companions were abandoned

[19] See: "Statuta Generalis Ordinis edita in Capitulis Generalibus celebratis Narbonae an. 1260, Assisii an. 1279 atque Parisiis an. 1292 (Editio critica et synoptica)", ed. Michael Bihl, *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 34 (1941), pp. 13–94 and pp. 284–358 (esp. p. 67, 11b). Cf. Cesare Cenci, "De Fratrum Minorum Constitutionibus Praenarbonensibus", *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 83 (1990), pp. 50–95.

[20] Salimbene, *Cronica*, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger, MGH Scriptores XXXII (Hanover-Leipzig, 1905–1913), p. 102.

[21] Cf. the remarks in the introduction of *Works of St. Bonaventure, Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, Latin Text from the Quaracchi Edition; New English Translation by Zachary Hayes O.F.M.; Introduction and Commentary by Philotheus Boehner, O.F.M. (Saint Bonaventure, 2002), p. 16 and p. 36.

in the course of the thirteenth century (only to be recuperated during the Observant renewal movements). However, it would be mistaken to assume that the disappearance of hermitages and the embrace of a life of ministry entailed a full decline of the Franciscan life of prayer, for it remained a major focal point within the order's formative traditions, particularly in the contexts of novice training treatises and a wider cloud of texts meant to steer the higher stages of religious apprenticeship among the friars, Franciscan nuns and sisters, and among aligned lay fellow travelers. In these texts, the legacy of prayer, so strongly present in the hagiographical tradition and in the writings of Francis and his companions, was reshaped into a didactic program: a *doctrina* or a discipline to be mastered by each and every Franciscan novice.

Very important in this regard are the works of religious instruction produced by the German friar and novice master David of Augsburg between ca. 1240 and 1270, which tried to show beginning friars and lay people associated with the order the way towards efficacious prayer, its phenomenology and its various functions. This is done most concisely in David's *Formula de Compositione Hominis Exterioris ad Novitios* (the first part of his *De Exterioris et Interioris Compositione Hominis*).[22]

Chapter Four of this text dwells on prayer in the context of the mental discipline during the nightly hours and in the transition from sleep to action around the beginning of matins. Novices are advised to wake up well before the beginning of the Office, in order to direct their spirit to God in prayer. Thus, they will be more even-minded and devout in the service and the praise of God. The very first fruits of their thoughts and actions in the morning should be offered to God in prayer or meditation, therewith to forestall vane thoughts.[23]

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[22] Notably chapter four (*De disciplina in dormiendo servanda*), chapter five (*De sollicitudine in divino Officio habenda*) and chapter 23 (*De oratione et meditatione in via facienda*), which touches on the adherence to the breviary prayers for the canonical hours when the friars are on the road). David von Augsburg, *De Exterioris et Interioris Hominis Compositione secundum Triplicem Statum Incipientium, Proficientium et Perfectorum Libri Tres*, ed. Patres Collegii S. Bonaventurae (Ad Claras Aquas, 1899), pp. 7–8 and p. 31.

[23] "Assuesce, quando opportune potes, parum ante matutina Officia evigilare, ut spiritus tuus dirigatur ad Deum in oratione, ut magis sobrius sis et devotus in servitio Dei et laudibus ipsius. Cum evigilas, statim omnes cogitationes abiice de corde tuo et somnia, quae somniasti in nocte, quibus diabolus te vellet occupare, et primitias cogitationum tuarum et actionum tuarum offere Deo in oratione vel meditatione aliqua bona cum corporis erectione vel genuflexione, donec aliquem affectum devotionis concipias et cogitationes vanas (. . .) a te abiicias . . ." *De Compositione Hominis Exterioris*, in *De Exterioris et Interioris Hominis Compositione*, p. 7.

The next chapter deals with the performance of the Divine Office itself. The novice should be neither reluctant nor fastidious, but should aim to be reverent and devout, as he is in the presence of angels. Even in moments when internal devotion is lacking, the novice should at least maintain the vestiges of external discipline and dignity, if only to show reverence to God and to be an example unto others.[24]

None of these instructions have much to say about the actual nature of prayer. This is reserved for chapters 53 to 63 of his *De Septem Processibus Religiosorum* (the third part of his *De Exterioris et Interioris Compositione Hominis*).[25] In tune with David's remarks on prayer in another work, namely the *Sieben Vorregeln der Tugend*, these chapters of *De Septem Processibus Religiosorum* discern between three kinds of prayer. First of all there is vocal prayer (*oratio vocalis*), based on ready-found words taken from the Gospel, the Psalms, liturgical hymns, existing prayer collections and laudatory poems.[26] The text assumes that vocal prayer has its natural place during the collective celebration of the Divine Office, but insists that it can and should also be performed solitarily, as part of the religious transformation of the self. The second mode of prayer is more spontaneous vocal prayer, shaped not by given formula but by words chosen by individual inclination (*oratio per verba ex proprio affectu formata*). This is described as an intimate conversation of the self with God, and needs moments of solitude and silence for its proper development.[27] The third mode of prayer is mental prayer (*oratio mentalis*), by which the mind and the heart converse with (and in the end might loose themselves in) God through the working of selfless love and reverent adoration. This is the most proper way to communicate with God, but

[24] *De Exterioris et Interioris Hominis Compositione*, pp. 7–8. The same emphasis on outward exemplarity is found in a further explanation of prayer in chapter 23. Ibid, pp. 31–32.

[25] LIII. De tribus modis orandi, et primo de vocali oratione, LIV. De secundo modo orandi, LV. De gratiarum actione, LVI. De laudatione Dei, LVII. De tertio modo orandi et orationis utilitate, LVIII. De multiplici praesentatione Dei in affectu orantis, LIX. Hortatio ad orationem frequentandam, LX. Tria maxime a profectu perfectionis retrahunt, LXI. De causis, quare non exaudiuntur orantes, LXII. De specialibus orationibus, LXIII. Gradibus quibusdam inferioribus proficit anima ad praedictum finem. *De Exterioris et Interioris Hominis Compositione*, pp. 296–347.

[26] *De Exterioris et Interioris Hominis Compositione*, p. 296.

[27] *De Exterioris et Interioris Hominis Compositione*, pp. 300–301.

also the most difficult to attain and to sustain over longer time periods.[28]

These three types of prayer also form the central subject matter of David's *Tractatus de Oratione*,[29] and they are integrated in the first three steps of his German work *Die sieben Staffeln des Gebets*,[30] of which we also have a Latin version (*Septem Gradus Orationis*).[31] Both the *De Oratione* and the *Die Sieben Staffeln des Gebets/Septem Gradus Orationis* are exceptional in the way in which they concentrate on prayer itself, revealing a fundamental aspect of David's anthropological vision.

For David, man was created in God's image. Yet this similitude could not be reached with fasts and charitable works alone, due to man's fundamental decrepitude and dependency on God's salvific grace. Not unlike Giles of Assisi and Bonaventure, David was adamant that it was prayer alone that could clear the path for spiritual progress. The Latin text of the *Septem Gradus Orationis* elaborates on this by depicting prayer's four "causæ": 1.) In prayer we receive all those things necessary for salvation more readily than through other actions (hence the need to resort to prayer both in temporal and in spiritual necessities; 2.) Prayer, more than other good deeds, tends towards God and heaven, steering free from terrestrial matters, whereas all other good actions always retain terrestrial vestiges; 3.) In prayer each spiritual advantage or disadvantage is perceived most clearly, showing man as in a mirror the stains which he contracts in other occupations; 4.) Prayer restores more strongly the knowledge of God

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[28] *De Exterioris et Interioris Hominis Compositione*, pp. 319–320.

[29] *Tractatus de Oratione*, ed. Lempp, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 19 (1899), pp. 343–345.

[30] *Die Sieben Staffeln des Gebets*: MS Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek cgm 176 ff. 206r–228r; Zürich Zentralbibliothek C 76 ff. 149va–158rb; Karlsruhe, Landesbibliothek St. Peter 85 ff. 42vb–44rb; St. Florian, Stiftsbibliothek XI 123 ff. 44v–54r; St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek Cod. 1033 ff. 57r–65r; St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek Cod. 1066 ff. 226b–231vb; Berlin (Marburg a. L.), Staatsbibliothek germ. 4° 1596f. 20v–36r; Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek cgm 7264 ff. 79rb–82ra. For an edition of the original German version composed by David himself, see *Kleine deutsche Prosadenkmäler des Mittelalters*, Heft 1 (Munich, 1965) and *Franziskanisches Schrifttum*, ed. Kurt Ruh (Luzern, 1965) I, pp. 221–247.

[31] *Septem Gradus Orationis*: MS Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek clm 9667 ff. 185ra–189b; Zisterzienserabtei Heiligenkreuz Cod. 2.1.C.e. (olim 222) ff. 83r–87v. It was edited as *De Septem Gradibus Orationis*: ed. J. Heerinckx, *Revue d'ascétique et de mystique* 14 (1933), pp. 146–170. A modern Italian translation of this text was made by Taddeo Bargiel and can be found in *I Mistici. Scritti dei Mistici Francescani Secolo XIII, I* (Assisi-Bologna, 1995), pp. 261–280.

that man has lost through sin, and therewith helps to strive towards the eternal life.[32]

Thus, recalling Ezekiel's Temple (Ezekiel 40:28), prayer is the purest if not the only proper gate towards God. As is indicated by the title of the *Septem Gradus Orationis/Die Sieben Staffeln des Gebets*, the path of spiritual progress through prayer consists of seven steps, each of which designates a different mystical stage in man's unification with God. The first grade is the 'genot gebet mit dem munde'/vocalis oratio', that is prayer with intense attention for the words themselves. The heart has to be with the words, and should not be disturbed by 'unstetekeit' or lack of constancy (*evagatio mentis* in the Latin version). The second grade focuses on seeking God in His word, by ruminating on God's word in prayer, both with the mouth and with the heart ('gotti wort kuwen und trueken mit deme gebette'/'sacra verba ruminari'), so to derive from it its sweet Divine savor. In the third grade, the words of prayer are bypassed. The heart now fills with the desire for God ('begirde ze gotte'/'expandit Deo cogitatione tacita desiderium cordis'). Even higher is the fourth grade, in which our mind is illuminated ('Da wirt du verstantnisse erluhtet ze erkennende unsihtige und himelsche tougeni'/'cum mens amore divino infunditur et illuminatur ad Cognoscendum Deum . . .') with invisible and heavenly things, and in which we beget a deeper insight, surpassing normal human understanding ('in quadam luce purae intelligentiae supra humana sublevata'). In the fifth grade, our heart gets intoxicated in the contemplation of God, and all the powers of the soul become one with the creator ('ein geist mit gotte.'/'sed tota colligitur intra se [anima] tam cogitatione quam affectione, et intellectu supra se in Deum tendens . . .'). This leads to the sixth grade of prayer, which truly is called *contemplatio*, in which man is taken out of himself into heavenly silence and Divine rest ('ueber sich selben gezueket in eine himelsche stille und in eine gotliche ruowe'/'Ibi in excessu mentis spiritus hominis Deo unitur'), at which point man is united with God in love. This is the apex of spiritual perfection for man in this life ('Talis igitur mentis excessus in Deum et illa unitas cum Deo est summa hominis perfectio in hac vita.'). Due to his inborn weakness, man can only maintain this stage for moments at a time, and he will normally not reach beyond it to the seventh and

[32] *De Septem Gradibus Orationis*, ed. Heerinckx, pp. 156–158: ". . . in oratione nobis omnia ad salutem veram necessaria promptius obtinemus quam in aliqua actione. . . ."

ultimate level (with as major exceptions the mystical experiences of Paul and the comprehension exhibited by the Virgin Mary). For other people, the final seventh stage of prayer is equated with the *visio beatifica* in the afterlife, where the angels and the saints see God face to face ('von antlutze zu antluze/'facie ad faciem').[33]

There are many parallels between David's *Septem Gradus Orationis* and his more encompassing *De Septem Processibus Religiosorum*,[34] for which the *Septem Gradus Orationis* might have been a precursor. Both works describe man's ultimate goal as complete rest in and complete union with God. The road towards this goal can only be found through a process of purification of the soul. Sin and attachment to the world have weakened the soul's powers and destroyed its inner harmony, thus preventing spiritual ascent. The primordial tool with which to overcome sin and attachment to the world and to redress the soul's inner balance is a life of asceticism and prayer. The closer a human being gets to God, through a relentless ascetical lifestyle and praying exercises, the closer God will draw to his creature, through the bestowal of mystical graces, which will finally lead to the soul's full transformation into God. Most of David's works are directly concerned with the exercise of asceticism and prayer necessary to make the soul worthy and ready for this transformation. In the last instance, therefore, they are meant to facilitate mysticism,. In David's vision, this is the ultimate goal, even when his works do not give a central place to mystical union itself.[35] Whereas the more

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[33] Cf. Georg Steer, "David von Augsburg und Berthold von Regensburg. Schöpfer der volkssprachigen franziskanischen Traktat- und Predigtliteratur," in *Handbuch der Literatur in Bayern vom Frühmittelalter bis zum Gegenwart*, ed. A. Weber (Regensburg, 1987), pp. 99–118 and esp. p. 101ff., where the author gives an analysis of *Die Sieben Staffeln des Gebets*, basing himself on Ruh's 1965 edition. For a comparable analysis of the Latin text, see the edition by Heerinckx, pp. 155ff.

[34] This was already noticed by Wilhelm Preger, *Geschichte der deutschen Mystik im Mittelalter* (Leipzig, 1881) II, p. 20, and emphasized once again by Heerinckx, *De Septem Gradibus Orationis*, pp. 150ff.

[35] See on this especially Kurt Ruh, "David von Augsburg und die Entstehung eines franziskanischen Schrifttums in deutscher Sprache," in *Augusta 955–1955. Forschungen und Studien zur Kultur- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte Augsburgs* (Munich, 1955), pp. 71–82; Kurt Ruh, "Zur Grundlegung einer Geschichte der franziskanischen Mystik," in *Altdeutsche und altniederländische Mystik*, ed. Kurt Ruh (Darmstadt, 1964), pp. 240–274; Werinhard J. Einhorn, "Der Begriff der 'Innerlichkeit' bei David von Augsburg," *Franziskanische Studien* 48 (1966), pp. 336–76; S. Francis Mary Schwab, *David of Augsburg's 'Paternoster' and the Authenticity of His German Works* (Munich, 1971), pp. 175–180 (which also establishes the 'canon' of David's authentic German works as opposed to those works by other friars inspired by David's teachings).

straightforward of David's teachings on prayer were directly meant for novices and young friars during their formative years, they eventually encompassed the whole religious life in its prospective advancing stages of spiritual perfection.

David's works exhibit a mendicant spirituality somewhat removed from the major centers of scholastic learning; directed towards a model of contemplative life with strong roots in the Benedictine, Cistercian and Victorine traditions. The context is somewhat different for the doctrines on prayer put forward in the novice treatises of Bonaventure and Bernard of Bessa, notably Bonaventure's *Regula Novitiorum* and Bernard's *Speculum Disciplinae*.

Bonaventure's *Regula Novitiorum*, produced in or shortly after 1259, can be interpreted as an attempt by the minister general to outline the main elements of religious instructions for novices recruited at centers of learning such as Paris, who would have a considerable level of literacy and scholastic acumen (many of those would have been advanced in their university *artes* studies before they embarked on the novitiate) but once recruited for the order needed to be acquainted as quickly as possible with elementary constitutive elements of the regulated Minorite life. The Franciscan rule of 1223 was not sufficiently geared to this target audience, whereas the impregnation of the novices with the tenets of the Franciscan religious life through the existing hagiographical and meditative legacies might have been too time consuming. After all, novices recruited at Paris and at other centers of higher learning would be expected to return to their scholastic studies as soon as their compulsory novitiate period had ended.[36]

The *Regula Novitiorum* tried to step into this gap, providing a concise introduction to the performance of the Divine Office, the nature of prayer, confession, communion, eating and abstinence, sleeping, service and the battle against distractions, honest comportment in speech and gestures, the struggle against temptations, contact with people outside, humility, silence, and poverty. It is apparent that Bonaventure considered prayer to be one of the first things novices should learn to master. In his *Regula Novitiorum*, the instruction of prayer fills by far the longest chapter. Moreover, as the second chapter within the work, it is situated immediately after the instructions

[36] Cf. the discussion of the *Regula Novitiorum* in Timothy Johnson, *Bonaventure: Mystic of God's Word* (New York, 1999), p. 23.

concerning the Divine Office, which for each and everyone entering the order must have been a first concern, as it determined the daily rhythm of life within the walls of the friary.[37]

Whereas the chapter on the Divine Office is concerned with communal vocal prayer and the praise of God, the chapter on prayer immediately following it deals with individual prayer, both orally and mentally. Describing prayer as one of the four pillars of the religious life, alongside of reading, meditation or service, the chapter insists that the road towards efficacious prayer lies in proper preparation of the heart towards devotion. This preparation depends on three conditions: 1.) a recall of the five senses from their outward directed occupations, thus to steer free from any sensual distraction during prayer; 2.) the acknowledgment of one's own insignificance, first of all by considering the immensity of God in comparison with one's own nothingness; then, as it were descending mentally into hell, by lamenting one's own unworthiness because of the grave sins already committed, and because of the enormity of Christ's passion by which man is saved; 3.) a proper understanding of and striving for the love of Christ, who not only died for his friends, but also for his enemies. This third consideration will make the novice understand that, but for the birth, suffering and death of Christ, man by his own merits would suffer eternal pains in hell. Considering this, the novice can ascend mentally back to the gathering of the beatified (*collegium Beatorum*). Fired by his realization of this manifestation of Divine love, the novice will begin to pray more fervently.[38]

After outlining these preparations of heart and mind, the *Regula Novitiorum* gives a remarkable concrete guideline concerning the number and the kinds of prayers to be said by each novice in vocal prayer. First and foremost, the novice should say to the honor of God and the Virgin 100 *Pater Noster* prayers with the *Gloria Patri*, as well as 100 *Ave Maria's* replete with genuflections. Likewise, the novice should daily pray the penitential psalms with their litanies for living benefactors, as well as vigils for the defunct. On top of that, the novice could say additional prayers. To avoid the pitfalls of daily routine, the novice should always aspire at proper devotion, and not

[37] *Reg nov* (8.475a–490b) deals in the first two of its sixteen chapters with prayer in the context of the Divine Office (8.475a–476b) and as a separate activity (8.476a–479b), explaining in simple terms its importance and its proper approach.

[38] *Reg nov* 2.1–4 (8.476a–478a).

merely engage in daily prayers with only their completion in mind.[39]

Urging the novice to devote himself to prayer, lest he will be awaiting eternal torments, the texts insists his prayers should either concentrate on the favors freely given by God or on the crimes performed by himself or by those near him.[40] In this context, the text asks attention for the novice's necessary self-reflection, stating that he should daily separate himself from others and aim to clear his soul from all distractions. Then, with profound humility and devotion of the heart, he should think through all the benefices offered by the Creator, and especially His willingness to become incarnate and to suffer a most scandalous death.[41]

Realizing how much Christ has suffered for mankind, the novice should lament his own offences to God. Therewith the soul of the novice will soften in sorrow, and he will cry bitter tears of penitence. From this low point, the novice should surge forward. He should not merely hope for Divine mercy but ask Christ, who by His death already has redeemed the novice and called him out of the world into his chosen religion, to be conserved immaculate for the 'collegium Sanctorum'.[42]

As said before, the novice should not only pray for himself. He should also pray for the church (the pope and the other prelates of the church militant, thereby weakening the enemy of the human race (the devil) so that the church may rise with its flock to celestial triumph), for all the religious (especially those in his own order), for all Christian people (particularly the order's benefactors), for the dead, and finally for the non-believers, so that, with Divine mercy, they will exchange devilish deceptions for the light of faith.[43]

Compared with the above-mentioned works of David of Augsburg, Bonaventure's remarks on prayer in his *Regula Novitiorum* remained relatively succinct, which suggests that he wrote this texts for beginners in need of basic religious instruction. More in-depth utterances on prayer with a comparable direction of spiritual ascent as David's *Septem Gradus Orationis* can be found in a number of Bonaventure's more spiritual works, such as the *De Triplici Via* (*Incendium Amoris*), a

[39] *Reg nov* 2.5 (8.478a).
[40] *Reg nov* 2.6 (8.478a–b).
[41] *Reg nov* 2.7 (8.478b).
[42] *Reg nov* 2.8 (8.479a).
[43] *Reg nov* 2.9 (8.479b).

'summa' or synthesis of spiritual theology along Dionysian lines, composed around the same time as the *Regula Novitiorum* for a diocesan priest, showing the ways leading to spiritual perfection.

The *De Triplici Via* treats prayer in its traditional context of *lectio, meditatio* and *contemplatio*. These activities together are responsible for the purgation, illumination, and the perfection of the soul via three complementary ways. Describing in the first chapter how reading and meditation purges, illuminates and perfects the soul, and before embarking in chapter three on the road of contemplation, the second chapter of *De Triplici Via* shows how the believer can use prayer to deplore human misery, ask for mercy, and express joy, true reverence and love towards the triune God. In this composition, prayer literally is central to the religious approach of the Divine.[44]

Comparable teachings can be found in Bonaventure's *Legenda Major*, notably in chapter 10 (*De studio et virtute orationis*) on Francis's extraordinary life of prayer, and in the *De Perfectione Vitae ad Sorores*, which can be seen as a work of spiritual reflection for Clarissan nuns, possibly the sisters of Longchamp founded by Isabelle of France.[45] Unhampered by the limits set for his *Regula Novitiorum*, this text deals with prayer considerably more fully (in chapter V, *De studio orationis*), telling the women that a luke-warm religious person not devoted to frequent prayer, is not solely miserable and useless, but indeed in the eyes of God a dead soul in a living body. The power of proper devotion unleashed by prayer in and by itself can curb the temptations and cunning of the enemy. Those not committed to the assiduous study of prayer frequently succumb miserably to temptation.[46] Indeed, devout prayer has immense powers that are beneficial at all times, both within the church choir (during the Divine Office) and outside. Recalling a conviction also voiced in the *Dicta* by Giles of

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[44] *Trip via* (8.3a–27b; esp. 8a–11b). Cf. Thomas Villanova a Zeil, *Das Gebet nach der Lehre des hl. Bonaventura* (Bolzano, 1931) and J.-F. Bonnefoy, *Une somme bonaventurienne de théologie mystique: le 'De triplici via'* (Paris, 1934).

[45] Cf. Johnson, *Bonaventure*, 23, as well as idem, *The Soul in Ascent: Bonaventure on Poverty, Prayer, and Union with God* (Quincy, 2000), pp. 104–105.

[46] "Religiosus indevotus et tepidus, orationem non frequentans assidue, non solum est miser et inutilis, quinimmo coram Deo mortuam fert animam in vivo corpore. Cum enim tantae efficiae sit devotionis virtus, ut ipsa sola maligni hostis devincat tentamenta et versutias, qui solus famulam Dei impedit, ne sursum ad caelum ascendat; non est mirum, quod tentationibus frequenter miserabiliter succumbat qui studium orationis assidue non frequentat." *Perf vitae* 5.1 (8.117a).

Assisi, the *De Perfectione Vitae ad Sorores* maintains that one hour of prayer is worth more than any other activity.[47]

Yet efficacious prayer is dependent upon three conditions. First of all, it should be performed with all senses shut, so that, unperturbed by external distractions the creature can, with a bitter and contrite heart, consider all its misery, both present, past and future, understanding therein its fundamental sinfulness, decrepitude and distance from God. This should reduce the sinner to tears: the true beginning of prayer. Second, it should be an act of gratitude, for all the good things already undeservingly received. In prayer, one should meditate with gratitude for one's creation as a Christian, for God's protection from many trespasses, and for God's guidance in the choice for the most perfect (Franciscan) religion. Without this gratitude, prayer is powerless. Third, perfect prayer is dependent upon total concentration on the matter at hand. It is indecent to speak to God with the mouth, yet to think something else in one's heart at the same time, causing half the heart to be directed towards heaven, whereas the other half stays behind. Such incomplete prayers are not received. Just as the praying subject has to forego all sensual distractions, he or she needs to close the heart to all exterior concerns, mundane desires and all forms of carnal love, directing it internally, to focus completely on the object of prayer itself.[48]

After stating these conditions, the text once more defines prayer, describing it at once as an extraction by with the grace of the Holy Spirit is drawn from the source of overflowing sweetness (i.e. the Trinity), and as the conversion of the mind into God by entering the cubicle of the heart with God as one's sole object of love. Developing a theme taken from the *Benjamin Major* by Richard of St. Victor, it finally explains that, through the fervent exercise of prayer, heart and soul can be lifted up towards God. Inflamed, the heart will transform the mind in devotion, admiration and exultation. Ultimately, the creature will be able to contemplate in full the Divine secrets (the trinitarian relationship and the nature of Christ's humanity) and savor the sweetness of the Divine realm and its inhabitants.[49]

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[47] "Est autem tantae virtutis devota oratio, ut ad omnia valeat et in omni tempore homo possit per eam lucrari (. . .) in choro et extra chorum; immo quandoque una hora lucratur plus orando quam valeat totus mundus." *Perf vitae* 5.1 (8.117a)

[48] *Perf vitae* 5.2–4 (8.117b–118b).

[49] *Perf vitae* 5.5–10 (8.118b–120b).

In essence this description approaches the *mentis excessus* elaborated in the sixth and seventh stages of David of Augsburg's *Septem Gradus orationis*.

Maybe to supplement Bonaventure's *Regula Novitiorum*, the minister general's former secretary Bernard of Bessa wrote towards the end of the thirteenth century for French novices his *Speculum Disciplinae*, a work that, thanks to its spiritual doctrine and style, was regarded to be a work by Bonaventure until recently (hence its inclusion in the Quaracchi edition of Bonaventure's *Opera Omnia*).[50] This novice training text describes the incubation period of the novitiate as an initiation into religious discipline. Quoting Hugh of Saint Victor, it claims that the use of discipline directs the soul to virtue, after which virtue will lead to beatitude. Hence, the exercise of discipline must be the beginning. Virtue is its perfection, and eternal beatitude the reward of the latter. But even the exercise of discipline itself must be prepared. The *Speculum* therefore deals with the preparatory conditions of discipline before it starts describing the discipline of the religious life itself.

The teachings on prayer are firmly situated in the section focusing on discipline itself, and in particular on the discipline of the heart. Elaborating on what Bonaventure had stated in his *Regula Novitiorum*, Bernard's *Speculum* insists that novices should not solely pray in the oratory (the vocal prayer associated with the Divine Office), but wherever they are. For novices should see themselves as a temple of God: a temple in which they should retreat for prayer, thanking God for their vocation and for the innumerable gifts of the savior. Again echoing Bonaventure, the text points out that the novices should not only pray for themselves, but also for others, both living and dead.[51]

Following the admonitions of Hugh of St. Victor, Bernard's *Speculum* indicates that only a consideration of man's miserable condition and the mercy of God will help the novice to attain an efficacious mode in prayer, a theme we again have also seen in the spiritual writings of Bonaventure. Prayer is once more dependent on devotion and the complete focus of the mind. While praying, the novice should consider himself to be in the presence of God. Hence, he should

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[50] Bernard of Bessa, *Speculum Disciplinae*, in Bonaventura, *Opera Omnia* (8.583a–622b).

[51] *Speculum Disciplinae* 12.6 (8.594b), describing prayer in the process as the ". . . hostis flagellum, peccatoris subsidium, proximi solatium, Dei sacrificium . . ."

express himself concisely, with purity of heart and with the compunction of tears, recalling the miserable state of his soul. The discipline of prayer should be exercised at every suitable moment, most particularly during the dangerous hours of rest, when the mind should be kept from wandering. Prayer therefore has an important place in the struggle against 'otium', with its dangers of distraction and temptation by the Devil and the inclinations of the flesh. This automatically leads to a consideration of the necessary frequency of prayer. The frequent exercise of prayer is important for the novice, as it is the whip to counter the enemy, the auxiliary force of the sinner without which he is helpless, the soul's shield and ultimate solace. Thus, individual prayer has to be engaged in whenever possible; also as a necessary complement to the communal oral prayer in the Divine Office. After the Divine Office is completed, novices should not just leave the oratory, but offer some prayer or a spontaneous praise as a small present to God, if only to counter their offense of negligence during the performance of their communal prayers.[52]

The novice treatises and spiritual guides written by David of Augsburg and their counterparts written by Bonaventure and Bernard of Bessa had an immediate and lasting impact, both within the male branch of the Franciscan order and beyond. Thanks to the studies of Kurt Ruh and Georg Speer, we have begun to glimpse elements of this, in particular in the German lands and the Low Countries.

The successes of David of Augsburg's works throughout the German order provinces can be ascribed partly to the effort of David and his immediate circle to provide vernacular versions of nearly all his writings. This is clearly the case with David's most important prayer guide, the *Septem Gradus Orationis*, which from the outset had a vernacular counterpart or even began as a German original (*Die Sieben Staffeln des Gebets*), and was transmitted to later generation both in Latin and in German vernaculars alongside of several other early

[52] *Speculum Disciplinae* 12.1–6 (8.593b–594b) The Divine Office itself is dealt with separately in 13.1–2 (8.595a) and 14.1–2 (8.595a–597a). *Speculum Disciplinae* 13.1 (8.595a) begins with "Restat de officio, prout est in addiscendo, deinde prout est in exsequendo, videre. Addiscendum est divinum officium, maximum in principio, diligenter . . ." *Speculum Disciplinae* 14.1 (8.595a) begins with "Ad disciplinam in divino officio, cum in ecclesia dicitur, observandum reverentia specialis, diligentia quoque et honestas praecipue requiruntur . . ." Nearly the same themes are taken up again in the second part of Bernard's *Speculum Disciplinae*, which contain some additional adhortations concerning the exercise of discipline.

translations of David's works of religious instruction.[53] David's novice training texts (gathered as the *De Exterioris et Interioris Compositione Hominis*), including their doctrine of prayer, likewise found many German and Dutch translations from the later fourteenth century onwards, many of which found their way into the houses of Poor Clares and female tertiaries.[54]

David's novice training treatises and his designated prayer guides, i.e. the *Die Sieben Staffeln des Gebets/Septem Gradus Orationis* and the *Tractatus de Oratione*, were complemented by individual *Betrachtungen und Gebete*, which probably should not be ascribed to David himself, but are the product of a wider Augsburg Minorite circle during the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.[55] These ready-made christocentric prayers, which tie in with David's first level of vocal prayer as discussed in David's *Tractatus de Oratione*, were designed for people unable or hesitant to design prayers of their own. In nearly all of these prayers, Christ is addressed in a very evocative way, as can be shown with the beginning of the first prayer in the collection:

> Heart-loved lord Jesus Christ, you, who are food of godly life, without whom nobody can have eternal life, help me now to become strong and full of inner mirth to provide solace outwardly and to obtain true knowledge of Divine love. Amen. When man was cast out for the sins done with the fruit of life in paradise, whereas you, dear lord brought us again back to the heavenly paradise . . . etc.[56]

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[53] It would seem that David's Latin *De Septem Gradibus Orationis*, which probably was based on a German original (cf. the 1965 edition of that text by Kurt Ruh), itself became the basis for another German version (known among German philologists as version 'A'). This German version, which was made by a later member of the Augsburg or Regensburg Franciscan circle, has been edited in *Deutsche Mystiker des 14. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Franz Pfeiffer (Leipzig, 1845), I, pp. 309–397. Cf. Kurt Ruh, "David von Augsburg und die Entstehung eines franziskanisches Schrifttums in deutscher Sprache," in Idem, *Kleine Schriften, Band II: Scholastik und Mystik im Spatmittelalter*, ed. Volker Mertens (Berlin-New York, 1984), pp. 46–67, esp. p. 59.

[54] Ruh, "David von Augsburg und die Entstehung eines franziskanisches Schrifttums," pp. 66–67 lists several manuscripts containing medieval Dutch versions of David's novice training treatises.

[55] A first comprehensive edition of these prayer texts is given in *Deutsche Mystiker des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts*, I: *Hermann von Fritzlar, Nicolaus von Strassburg, David von Augsburg*, ed. Franz Pfeiffer (Leipzig, 1845), pp. 309–405. They are discussed in Ruh, "David von Augsburg und die Entstehung eines franziskanisches Schrifttums," pp. 46–67, esp. p. 55.

[56] "Herzenlieber hêrre Jèsu Kriste, dù ein spîse bist des gotlichen lebens, âne die niemen êwiclichen geleben mac, nù gîp dich mir innen zu kreften und zu vreuden, ùzen ze trôste und ze der minne wâren urkünde. Amen. Wan der mensch von den sünden die er tet des lebens vruht in dem paradise verstôzen wart, dô dû ins, lieber

These prayer collections are just one further aspect of the ongoing vernacularization of David's works. Another important text in this regard is the *Geistlicher Herzen Baumgarten/Geistliche Baumgarten*, which builds on David's novice training treatises (and on sermons by Berthold of Regensburg), and might have been written for the Third Order sisters of St. Maria Stern in Augsburg (for whom the friars also translated Nicholas IV's Rule for Tertiaries and related works).[57] In all cases (the novice training treatises, the prayer guides, the prayer collections and the *Geistlicher Herzen Baumgarten*), David's works appealed to lay and religious circles within and beyond the Franciscan ambiance, which sought to apply a form of methodic meditation to discipline the emotions of the heart as a prelude to higher levels of spiritual perfection.

In the wake of the successes of David's treatises, we see a comparable transmission throughout the German lands and the Low Countries of 'Bonaventurean' works of religious instruction. Alongside of the Pseudo-Bonaventurean passion meditation treatises (the *Meditationes Vitae Christi* and the *Stimulus Amoris*) and the *Vitis Mystica*, these include more securely ascribed texts, such as the *Soliloquia*, the *Lignum Vitae*, and of course the *Legenda Major*, all of which combine prayer instructions in a variety of meditative contexts. Considered to be a work by Bonaventure throughout the later medieval period, the *Speculum Disciplinae* by Bernard of Bessa likewise found its German translations (best documented is the printed translation prepared by a Dominican friar for Duchess Sidonia of Saxony, wife of Albrecht I).[58]

With respect to the dissemination of Bonaventure's prayer doctrine, most significant were the various German and Dutch translations of the *Regula Novitiorum*,[59] the *De Perfectione Vitae ad Sorores*,[60] and the *De Triplici Via*.[61] Nearly two third of all the surviving Latin and

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hêrre, wider brachte ze dem himelischen paradise . . . etc." *Deutsche Mystiker des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts*, I, p. 309.

[57] Cf. Ruh, "David von Augsburg und die Entstehung eines franziskanisches Schrifttums," pp. 46ff.

[58] Ruh, *Bonaventura Deutsch*, pp. 283–284.

[59] Ruh, *Bonaventura Deutsch*, pp. 251–253.

[60] Ruh, *Bonaventura Deutsch*, p. 182, describing the Dutch translation present in MS Leyden, University Library Lett. P. 332.

[61] See for instance *Bonaventura, 'De Triplici Via' in altschwabischer Übertragung*, ed. Kurt Ruh, Texte des späten Mittelalters, Heft 6 (Berlin, 1957), surviving in five manuscripts. Another German translation by the Carthusian monk Ludwig Moser

vernacular manuscripts of the latter text come from libraries in the German-Dutch language realm. Not by coincidence, the first imprint of the Latin text took place in Speyer in 1472.[62] The work was not solely popular in Franciscan and Carthusian circles. Just like the novice training treatises by David of Augsburg, Bonaventure's *De Triplici Via* also had an impact among the Dutch protagonists of the Modern Devotion Movement, such as Florens Radewijns and Gerard Zerbolt of Zutphen.[63]

Prayer in Late Medieval Franciscan Works of Religious Instruction

Roughly at the same time that the novice treatises and prayer guides of David, Bernard and Bonaventure made headway within and outside the Franciscan order family, accompanied by a cloud of individual prayers ascribed to these authors (or to Francis of Assisi and Ubertino of Casale), and inserted in many late medieval prayer books and books of hours,[64] a number of Franciscan works of religious instruction started to make an impact.

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found its way to the printing press of Michael Furter in Basel in 1507. Yet another Carthusian initiative is the free German translation of the prologue and the first book of the *De Triplici Via* in MS Mainz, Stadtbibliothek 128 ff. 162r–168r. Dutch translations and/or excerpts in the Dutch vernacular can be found in MS Ghent University Library Rés. 511[1] & MS Brussels, Royal Library II, 1278. For more information on these German and Dutch versions, see Ruh, *Bonaventura Deutsch*, pp. 77ff. and pp. 106–119. The extensive translation activities of the Carthusian Bonaventure translator Ludwig Moser are described on pp. 186ff.

[62] Cf. *Bonaventura, 'De Triplici Via' in altschwabischer Übertragung*, p. 7.

[63] Ruh, *Bonaventura Deutsch*, pp. 71f. Likewise, the anonymous *Die gheestelike boem mit synen drien telghen*, found in a manuscript from the circumference of Ruusbroec, now MS Berlin, Staatsbibl. Germ 4° 1086, seems to build both on the *De Triplici Via* and on the *Lignum Vitae*. Cf. C. de Bruin, *Middelnederlands geestelijk proza* (Zutphen, 1940), pp. 92f. (n. 38).

[64] See for instance MS Heidelberg Pal. Germ. 629 ff. 5r–8v: "Ein schön gebet zu der hayligen dryvaltigkait, das sanctüs bonaventüra selbs gebetet had. . . ." Various prayer exercises associated with Francis of Assisi, notably the *Vijf ghebedekens die de heilighe sunte Franciscus altoes plach te lesen* have been identified a.o. in MS Darmstadt, Hessische Landesbibliothek MS 1922 ff. 188r–190v & MS 1869 f. 216v. See on these manuscripts, and on several other prayer collections from female monasteries with Franciscan materials *Deutsche und Niederländische gebetbuchhandschiften der hessischen Landesbibliothek Darmstadt*, ed. Gerard Achter & Hermann Krauss (Darmstadt, 1959), passim. In this context should also be mentioned the appearance of various German translations of *Pater Noster* explanations by Francis of Assisi, Petrus Christiani, and

An important specimen from the later fourteenth century is Otto of Passau's *Vierundzwanzig Alten oder der Goldene Thron*. This German treatise explains in 24 chapters many core issues of Christian faith to the 'loving soul' of the believer, by mouth of the 24 elders of the Apocalypse. For all its compilatory characteristics, it had a large reception history throughout the fifteenth century (most significantly among female monastic and mendicant communities in the Rhine valley), witness its survival in more than 100 manuscripts and a number of incunable editions from 1480 onwards.

In chapter seventeen (*Über das Gebet*), one of these elders introduces to the 'loving soul' the doctrine of Christian prayer,[65] teaching what the soul should pray, when it should pray, and how powerful an activity prayer could be, providing holiness and, eventually, beatitude. According to the elder of the Apocalypse, it is a doctrine taught by Christ Himself to the disciples, when they asked Him to teach them how to pray. In answer, Christ gave them the *Pater Noster*, which contains the seven best demands to ask God in order to fulfill our human needs.[66] Distinguishing in familiar fashion between the various kinds of vocal and mental prayer, the elder of chapter seven-

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Bernardino of Siena, as well as reworkings of the *Pater Noster* explanation by David of Augsburg etc. Cf. *Franziskanisches Schrifttum im deutschen Mittelalter*, Band II: *Texte*, ed. Kurt Ruh, Dagmar Ladisch-Grube & Josef Brecht (Munich-Zurich, 1985), pp. 253ff. These reworkings had a place in the increasing emphasis on catechetical instruction of the populace. One of the most successful German translations of Bonaventure's *Regula Novitiorum* was made by Konrad Nater, vice-guardian and guardian in the convents of Munich, Lenzfried, Basel, Oppenheim, Nuremberg, and Mainz between ca. 1486 and 1501. This text can be found in various manuscripts and in old and modern editions. Cf. Ruh, *Franziskanisches Schrifttum*, p. 51 & p. 138 and *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters, Verfasserlexikon*, 2nd ed., VI (Berlin-New York, 1986), pp. 865–866. On the reception history of Franciscan prayers, see also F. Callaey, "L'influence et la diffusion de l'*Arbor vitae* de Ubertin de Casale," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 17 (1921), pp. 533–546; B. Spaapen, "Nieuwe stoffen voor de studie van het Middelnederlandsch Gebedenonderricht III," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 14 (1940), pp. 135–149; Optatus van Asseldonck, "De invloed van Casale op het geestelijk leven in de Nederlanden," *Franciskaans Leven* 30 (1947), pp. 112–114; Kurt Ruh, *Bonaventura Deutsch* (Bern, 1956/Darmstadt, 1964), passim; and Ildefonsus Vanderheyden, *Bonaventura. Studien zu seiner Wirkungsgeschichte*, Franziskanische Forschungen, 28 (Werl, 1976), passim.

[65] Otto of Passau, *Über das Gebet* (taken from his *Vierundzwanzig Alten oder der Goldene Thron*), edited in *Franziskanisches Schrifttum im deutschen Mittelalter*, Band II: *Texte*, pp. 183–198 (For an edition of the complete text, see *Die vierundzwanzig Alten Ottos von Passau*, ed. Wieland Schmidt, Palaestra, 212 (Leipzig, 1938)).

[66] *Über das Gebet*, in *Franziskanisches Schrifttum im deutschen Mittelalter*, Band II: *Texte*, p. 184.

teen eventually defines its fundamental essence as 'a positive desire of the heart (gemuet), which turns itself completely towards God.'[67]

Otto's elder furthermore tells mankind how to pray: People should be loyal and faithful in their prayer, for praying cleanses the sins. They should also be confident, for in it God opens His secrets. They should be humble and attentive. Thus their prayer will enter the ears of God. In addition, they should show deference, as acknowledged sinners do not dare to lift their eyes to heaven. Finally, prayer should be untainted, serious and wholesome, filled with love and yearning, and it should be excercised at all times.[68]

Otto steered clear from overt Bonaventurean influences. For his own avowedly compilatory work, he reached back instead to disparate utterances concerning prayer in the works of Augustine, John Damascenes, Chrysostom, Cassiodorus, Jerome, Bernard of Clairvaux and the Victorines. More curiously, he even enlisted the support of Avicenna and Aristotle when explaining the nature of prayer and its significance as a human activity. In outline, however, his teachings concerning prayer contain many parallels with those of David of Augsburg.

In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the high point of the reception history of the Davidean and Bonaventurean textual corpus, an impressive number of new Franciscan works of religious instruction saw the light. Many of these were the product of Observant friars in Spain, France, Italy and the German lands, who once again displayed a strong interest in prayer and the contemplative life. This revival was connected with manifold Observant efforts to regain access to the eremitical legacy of the early Franciscan movement, and went hand in hand with a rediscovery of Francis's *Testament* and the *Regula pro Eremitoriis Data*.

Eventually, most Observant currents would abandon their early eremitical leanings, notably those who, lead by Bernardino of Siena and John of Capistrano, reclaimed the Franciscan apostolic life with great energy from the 1410s onwards. Yet even John of Capistrano professed a great appreciation of prayer and the contemplative life, as can be gathered from his support for the programs of contemplative prayer among the Colettines and the Observant Poor Clares

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[67] ". . . ain guetig begird dez gemuetes, daz sich gancz in got al ain keret. . . ." in *Franziskanisches Schrifttum im deutschen Mittelalter*, Band II: *Texte*, p. 185.

[68] *Franziskanisches Schrifttum im deutschen Mittelalter*, Band II: *Texte*, p. 192.

(a topic which deserves a full treatment of its own),[69] and from his instructional letter to the Nuremberg guardian Albert Puchelbach regarding the training of new postulants, dating from 1452. In this letter, John was adamant that novices were taught to meditate on Christ's passion, to contemplate their sins and, first and foremost, to engage in mental prayer, the *conditio sine qua non* for developing the religious self.[70]

It would be impossible to provide a complete list of the Observant works of religious instruction in which prayer had a central place, least of all because it was a central element, explicitly or implicitly, in nearly all of them, including the large Observant handbooks of spiritual growth, such as Hendrik Herp's famous *Spieghel der Volcomenheit*.[71] In this essay, I would like to concentrate on some writings ascribed to Lopez of Salinas and Francis of Osuna.

The *Memoriale Religionis* and the *Memorial de la vida y ritos de la Custodia de Santa Maria de los Menores* ascribed to Lopez of Salinas or his immediate surroundings, both of which stem from the first half of the fifteenth century, functioned as instructional guides for officials and novices within the Spanish Villacrecean reform. They explained in considerable detail the obligations and orientation of the Villacrecean Observant life, which was an eremitical endeavour in absolute poverty and humility according to the ideals described by the *Regula pro Eremitoriis data* and informed by stories drawn from the *Fioretti* and other para-hagiographical sources.

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[69] The life of prayer in manifold communities of Colettines and Observant Poor Clares has not yet been dealt with appropriately by modern scholars. The same is true for the many treatises written by Colettine nuns, Observant Poor Clares and their male confessors, many of which develop doctrines of prayer and spiritual growth. Cases in point are Colette of Corbie's *Constitutiones* and her spiritual letters, *La Vita Spirituale* by Camilla Battista of Varano, the *Regole di Vita Religiosa* and other works ascribed to Catherine Vigri of Bologna, and the *Monte de la Orazione* by Eustochia Calafato.

[70] ". . . Placet mihi, quod Novitii discant cantare; magis tamen placeret, ut discerent plorare et orationi vacare (. . .) Item, quod singulis diebus faciant coronam beatae Mariae virginis cum septem meditationibus (. . .) Item, quod instituatur pro Novitiis una hora pro oratione mentali, ut discant semetipsos cognoscere (. . .) et alias devotas Orationes faciant quotidie." *Epistola ad Albertum Puchelbach*, in Lucas Wadding, *Annales Minorum* XII (Quaracchi, 1932), pp. 183–185; Glassberger, *Chronica*, in *Analecta Franciscana* II (Ad Claras Aquas, 1887), pp. 342–343.

[71] A tentative overview is given in chapter eight of my book *Franciscan Literature of Religious Instruction before the Council of Trent*, Studies in the History of Christian Traditions, CXVII (Leiden-Boston, 2004), pp. 540–560.

Following the 1223 *Regula Bullata*, Lopez of Salinas and his colleagues frowned upon overabundance in learning. Their friars instead should give themselves over to prayer, devotional exercises, and in that context needed to shed tears of compunction. This is not to say that books were completely discarded. Yet novices should solely acquaint themselves with texts that allowed them to flesh out their Minorite spirituality. To further this cause, four authoritative spiritual sources in particular are mentioned in the *Memoriale Religionis*, namely the devotional teachings of Bernard of Clairvaux, Bonaventure's *Regula Novitiorum*, Humbert of Roman's initiation into the Dominican life, and the *De Statibus Monachorum* by John Cassian.[72] As the *Memoriale* and its sister text make out, novices had to master the doctrines on vocal and mental prayer and the devotional exercises found in these and related works, in order to engage fruitfully in their contemplative obligations (*los oficios contemplativos*), to which all other activities of the friars should yield.[73]

The sixth chapter of the *Memorial de la vida y ritos* explains that Villacrecean friars should devote between six and a half to nine full hours a day to the Divine Office (six and a half on week days, eight on Sundays and feast days, nine around Easter and other major feasts), which is explicitly identified with vocal prayer. On top of these hours of communal vocal prayer, the friars should recite the small Office of the Cross and of the Holy Spirit.[74]

Beyond these obligations of vocal prayer, concerning which the *Memorial* provides a number of additional reglementations (reaching

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[72] Lopez de Salinas, *Memoriale Religionis o Breve Memorial de los Oficios Activos y Contemplativos de la Religion de los Frailes Menores*, Capitulo II, f. 36r. (Del enformador de los nuevos fraires e de los que prueban para ser fraires), edited in *Introducción a los orígenes de la Observancia en España. Las reformas en los siglos XIV y XV*, Publicaciones de 'Archivo Ibero-Americano' (Madrid, 1958), p. 690.

[73] Salinas, *Memoriale Religionis*, p. 710. In that same chapter, another list of authorities for the friars' spiritual life is mentioned. Here the lists comprises for instance the *Regula Bullata* and the *Testament* of Francis, Bonaventure's *Regula Novitiorum*, Cassian's *De Statutis Monachorum* and the *Collationes*, John Climacus's *Scala Paradisi*, the *Disciplina Monachorum*, which Lopez ascribes to Bernard of Clairveaux, some spiritual writings by Jerome, and a work ascribed to Richard of St. Victor. Ibid, p. 711.

[74] *Memorial de la vida y ritos*, Chapter VI (Del oficio divino), in *Introducción a los orígenes de la Observancia en España*, pp. 724–727 (pp. 726–727). Repeatedly, Lopez identifies in this chapter the Divine Office with the act of vocal prayer ("Cerca del Officio divino que es oración vocal . . ."; "E cerca de la vocal facemos el Officio divino . . ."; "E habemos en costumbre de poner reglas e ordenanzas sobre que este Officio divino, que es oración vocal . . ."), as if to make sure that novices understand that it has to be performed with due respect.

back to the Narbonne Constitutions, papal bulls and Francis's *Regula pro Eremitoriis data*), it devotes, like Bonaventure's *Regula Novitiorum*, a separate chapter to additional prayer exercises (*Capitulo VII: De la oración*). First of all, the friars were supposed to engage for an hour and a half in mental prayer while remaining in choir after finishing their obligations for the Divine Office. On top of that, the friars should spend at least one hour a day in private prayer in between their other prayer and meditation obligations. After Compline, the friars should retreat into private prayer for up to an hour. This was supplemented by another quarter hour of meditation on the passion of Christ. The friars were also asked to fulfill every night a series of prayer exercises in front of various altars, and to walk in silent procession the eight prayer stations laid out in the cloister, where they ought to pray for other people (be they other friars, benefactors, enemies, people in mortal sin, souls in purgatory or those who were in a state of grace).[75] Therewith, nearly all waking hours of the Villacreceans, except for one or two hours designated for manual labor, were devoted to prayer: public vocal prayer in the Divine Office, and a variety of mental prayer exercises, performed either alone, or in the presence of other friars. The efficacy of all these prayers was, of course, dependent upon a proper habit of humility.[76]

Feeding on the influence of Hendrik Herp's *Spiegel der Volcomenheit/ Speculum Perfectionis*,[77] as well as on the legacy of the Villacreceans, a veritable landslide of independent Franciscan prayer guides and contemplative works saw the light in the Iberian peninsula shortly after 1500. A definite hallmark in this tradition was the *Tercer Abecedario* (1527) by Francis of Osuna (ca. 1492–1541), a former soldier turned Observant friar around 1513, who went through the Franciscan school network in Castile, yet at the age of thirty retreated to the Recollect convent Nuestra Señora de la Salceda. In this and other meditative communities, he lived according to the Recollect statutes, spending the morning hours with prayer and meditation on the Passion of Christ, and the night hours with meditative exercises directed to deepen the knowledge of the self. Based on his own meditative experiences, Francis of Osuna wrote with his *Tercer Abecedario*

[75] Salinas, *Memorial de la vida y ritos*, pp. 727–728.
[76] Salinas, *Memorial de la vida y ritos*, p. 729.
[77] Cf. Jean Orcibal, "Les traductions du 'Spieghel' de Henri Herp en italien, portugais et espagnol," in Idem, *Études d'histoire et de littérature religieuses (XVIe–XVIIIe siècles)* (Paris, 1997), pp. 661–672.

a systematic manual on the *recogimiento* (centered on the *nada pensar*: a spiritual exercise to empty the mind, in order to gain access to the Divine and become a light of God), which became the most popular of his many meditative writings. The whole *Tercer Abecedario* is saturated with meditative exercises with an import on prayer and its methods. Yet the most clear expression of Osuna's prayer doctrine is found in the work's *Terciodécimo Tratado*, chapters one to four.[78]

The first chapter explains that there are three fundamental levels of prayer, namely for beginners, for the slightly advanced and for the really experienced. The first of these levels is vocal: it comprises both the communal prayer of the Divine Office, and all the other prayers said out loud. Among these vocal prayers, the *Pater Noster* is pre-eminent, due to the excellence of its author. Nobody who pronounces it with devotion would be without Divine pardon. It is through this prayer that God will forgive man his venial sins. Because the prayer is given to mankind by Christ Himself, man can be assured of its reception. Hence it is the basic model for all prayer, containing all necessary elements and expressing all one should ask for.[79]

The centrality of the *Pater Noster* on this basic level of vocal prayer is accentuated by Osuna's choice to present in the second chapter Francis of Assisi's explanation of the *Pater Noster*, to follow up with a short elucidation of his own. This elucidation emphasizes the necessity to pray the *Pater Noster* with great affection and compunction of the heart, replete with an abundancy of tears, defining the prayer as a petition sent to God himself. Although it is commendable to adopt other texts for one's vocal prayer exercises, it is much better to pray the one petition that for sure will please the Lord, allowing the praying subject to express his needs concisely and to the point.[80]

The second mode of prayer, designed for the more advanced, is prayer with the heart alone. In this mode, man asks God all that he needs within himself. For this, man needs to clear his heart, by thinking saintly things, by focusing on his own sins and by bringing

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[78] *Tercer Abecedario* (Toledo: Ramón de Petras, 1527). It was reprinted numerous times. For a modern edition and a first analysis of the text, see *Tercer abecedario espiritual*, ed. Melquíades Andrés, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos (Madrid, 1972). Recently, an internet version became available. See: *Tercer Abecedario*, Microbook Study Library (www.microbookstudio.com/osuna.htm).

[79] *Tercer Abecedario*, Terciodécimo Tratado, Capítulo Uno. Microbook Study Library (www.microbookstudio.com/osuna.htm), without page numbers.

[80] *Tercer Abecedario*, Terciodécimo Tratado, Capítulo Duo.

to mind the history and the mystery of Christ's passion. It only works when man aspires heavenly beatitude more than sublunar matters and loves God more than anything else. Religious people and those in spiritual retreat most of all are obliged to pray in this way. After all, the monastery should be a house of prayer and not resemble a cave of robbers. The better prayer opportunities given to religious people, their state, and the obligations flowing from it oblige them to devote themselves wholesale to meditation and considerations concerning the Divine mysteries. For them, vocal prayer alone does not suffice.[81]

Finally, the third and highest level of prayer is mental or spiritual prayer, with which the human soul can rise to God in the most pure fashion possible available to it: on the wings of desire and devout affection, strengthened by love. This highest level is a veritable adoration of the Trinity, leaving behind as much as possible the limitations of the body and the imagination, and aspiring towards a conformity between the person praying and the Lord. Therewith, it is the form of prayer most esteemed by God, who Himself is pure spirit.[82]

Francis of Osuna's doctrine of prayer as developed in the *Tercer Abecedario*, which is not fundamentally different from the techniques described in the *Via spiritual* by Barnabas of Palma (1469–1532) and the *Subida del Monte Sión* by Bernardino of Laredo (1482–1540), had a large impact on the Spanish spiritual landscape, both within and beyond the Franciscan order. Within the order, we can signal its influence in the *Tratado de Oración* (1540),[83] written by the Observant friar Christoforo Ruiz (ca. 1490–1550), in the works of Francis Ortiz, (1497–1547),[84] and possibly also in the lengthy *Oratorio de religiosos y*

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[81] *Tercer Abecedario*, Capítulo III.

[82] *Tercer Abecedario*, Capítulo IV: De otra manera de orar. "La tercera manera de oración se dice mental o espiritual, con que se alza lo más alto de nuestra ánima más pura y afectuosamente a Dios con las alas del deseo y piadosa afección esforzada por el amor . . ."

[83] *Tratado de Oración* (Mexico, 1540). Ruiz's *Tratado* was one of the first prayer guides published in Mexico (where Christoforo had been active as the guardian of the Tlalmanalco convent since 1538), and might have been one of the foundational texts for the development of Franciscan spirituality in the New World.

[84] Other Franciscan authors of prayer guides on whom Osuna's work had a formative impact were Pedro of Alcántara (1499–1562) and Martin of Lilio. Pedro of Alcántara's *Tratado de la Oración* very succesfully served as a guide of meditative prayer for lay people and has survived in more than 200 editions, the first of which

ejercicio de virtuosos, an important Observant text for Franciscan novices and novice masters produced by Anthony of Guevara (1480–1545).[85] Following a variety of introductory remarks, this latter *Oratorio* covers the qualities and requirements of novices and novice masters in general (chapters 6–8), the religious virtues that novices have to internalise (chapters 9–14), the responsibilities of the novice master in this process (chapters 15–18), as well as the sins of language, the magnificence of the religious life, the necessity of corporal mortification, the proper way to celebrate the Divine Office, the character and modes of prayer, and the nature of the monastic vows (chapters 19–51).[86]

The Instruction of Prayer in the Early Capuchin Order

When dominant strands within the regular Observance abandoned their eremitical leanings, becoming increasingly involved with the vicissitudes of urban ministry and pastoral care, several new eremitical reform movements emerged in the early sixteenth century. The most successful of these, the Capuchins, once again opted for a more eremitical lifestyle with a strong emphasis on prayer and contemplation. Like their Observant forerunners, the early Capuchins reached

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go back to the mid-sixteenth century. For additional details, See M. Ledrus, "Grenade et Alcantara. Deux manuels d'oraison mentale," *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique* 32 (1962), pp. 447–460 and p. 33 (1963), pp. 32–44; Luis Villasante, "Doctrina de S. Pedro de Alcantara sobre la oración mental," *Verdad y Vida* 21 (1963), pp. 207–255; *Místicos franciscanos españoles*, I: *Vida y escritos de San Pedro de Alcántara*, ed. Rafael Sanz Valdivieso, Biblioteca de autores cristianos, 570 (Madrid, 1996); Marcos Rincón Cruz, "Los escritos de San Pedro de Alcántara. Edición completa," *Verdad y Vida* 57 (1999), pp. 537–548; Julio Herranz Migueláñez, "San Pedro de Alcántara y la espiritualidad alcantarina," *Verdad y Vida* 57 (1999), pp. 411–449; Léon Amorós, "San Pedro de Alcántara y su 'Tratado de la oración y meditación. Nueva revisión del problema," *Archivo Ibero-Americano* 22 (1962), pp. 163–221. Lilio's text first was published as the *Suma de fray Luis de Granada: Tratado de oración mental y exercicios espirituales ahora nuevamente corregido y añadido* (Alcalá de Henares, 1558).

[85] *Oratorio de religiosos y ejercicio de virtuosos* (Valladolid, 1542). It saw additional editions in Spain, France and Italy. A modern edition was issued in *Misticos Franciscanos Españoles*, Biblioteca Autores Cristianos (Madrid, 1948) II, pp. 445–761.

[86] See on these and other works of Antonio: Lino Gómez Canedo, "Las obras de Fr. Antonio de Guevara. Ensayo de un catálogo completo de sus ediciones," *Archivo Ibero-Americano* 6 (1946), 339–404; Agustín Redondo, *Antonio de Guevara (1480–1545), et l'Espagne de son temps. De la carrière officielle aux oeuvres politico-morales* (Genève, 1976); and Emilio Blanco, "Bibliografia de Fray Antonio de Guevara, OFM (1480?–1545)," *El Basilisco* 26 (Oviedo, 1999), pp. 81–86.

back to the Franciscan meditative legacy of the thirteenth century, notably the *Regula Bullata*, Francis of Assisi's *Testamentum* and the writings of Bonaventure, to develop their own doctrines of mental prayer; an activity that they considered to be a secure anchor for their religious life, and held pride of place in their rule commentaries, novice training treatises, and designated prayer guides.[87]

The new Capuchin order took the novitiate seriously from the outset, as can be seen in the comparatively lengthy regulations devoted to the reception of postulants and the formation of novices in the Capuchin constitutions of 1536, 1552 and 1575.[88] To train their novices, the early Capuchins made ample use of existing novice treatises and meditative texts circulating in Conventual and Observant circles, whether or not combined with recycled and at times newly invented materials ascribed to Bernard of Clairvaux and Bonaventure. A good example is the newly made 'Bonaventurean' *Sex Documenta Beati Bonaventurae, Cuilibet Proficere Volenti Utilissima*, a work that is also known as the *Sex Documenta a Sancto Bonaventura Doctore Seraphico pro Iuvenum et Novissiorum Instructione*.[89] In the context of establishing new paradigms for religious formation, the early Capuchins took effort to combine these materials with new editions and translations of Francis of Assisi's *Regula Bullata* and his *Testament*, thus providing novices and novice masters with formative 'libretti della Regola'[90]

Beyond such compilations, the Capuchins produced novice treatises and commentaries of their own. Early ventures in this direc-

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[87] The best introduction to that is given in Remigius ab Alosto, "De oratione mentale in ordine Fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum. Legislationis expositio," *Collectanea Franciscana* 3 (1933), pp. 40–66, esp. pp. 40–41 and pp. 46–49 (prayer in the Capuchin constitutions of 1529), pp. 49–58 (the important utterances of prayer in the Capuchin constitutions of 1536), and pp. 58ff. (prayer in the Capuchin constitutions of 1552, 1575, 1608 and 1643).

[88] *I frati cappuccini. Documenti e testimonianze del primo secolo*, I, ed. Costanzo Cargnoni (Perugia, 1988), pp. 269–283.

[89] This text can for instance be found in the *Omnes plenariae et quacumque aliae stationes et indulgentiae fratribus minoribus (. . .) a summis pontificibus concessae ex privilegiorum Ordinis compendio sedulo ac fideliter selectae et in hunc libellum breviter congestae* (Toulouse, 1553), pp. 92–94, in the *Regula et Testamentum Nostri Seraphici Patris S. Francisci* (Antwerp: Plantijn, 1589), pp. 111–113, *Regola e Testamento del nostro serafico padre san Francesco* (Venice: Giunti, 1597), 70r–v, as well as in *I frati cappuccini*, I, pp. 1495–1498.

[90] See on these Elizondo, "Regola francescana presso i primi cappuccini," pp. 625–665. The most influential 'libretti della regola' no doubt were those published by the Plantijn printing house in 1589 and the Italian version published in Venice (1597). Many texts of these collections have been edited in *I frati cappuccini*, I, pp. 1491–1591.

tion are the *De Exercitiis Religiosorum* by Francis Titelmans (1502–1537), which is not very well-known,[91] and John of Fano's *Brevis Discursus super Observantia Paupertatis/Breve discorso circa l'Osservanza del Voto della Minorica Povertà* (Brescia, 1536),[92] one of the most widely used manuals for practical religious instruction within the early Capuchin order. It saw more than 100 editions in various languages, frequently in combination with materials from the above-mentioned 'libretti della Regola'.[93]

The prayer doctrine alluded to in the *Brevis Discursus* is developed more fully in John's *Arte de la Unione*, written shortly after 1534 during a meditative retreat after his rather abrupt transfer to the Capuchins.[94] The *Arte* offers lay and religious people a method of prayer, to steer them towards a life of perfect love of and in God. Following the Bonaventurean triad of the purgative, illuminative and unitive ways of spiritual ascent, and borrowing elements from Garcia Cisneros OSB's *Exercitatorio de vida espiritual*, Hendrik Herp's *Speculum Perfectionis*, and works by Bartholomew Cordoni and Peter of Lucca, the *Arte* enlists daily prayer as a privileged means to aspire via this threefold road to a level of spiritual growth at which the soul can hope to obtain an affective union (a spiritual marriage) with God in contemplation. Going beyond a mere theory of prayer in this itinerary of the soul's ascent, the text facilitates neophytes with detailed advice on prayer techniques, the times and subjects suitable for the different prayer exercises for the various days of the week, and the

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[91] Franciscus Titelmans allegedly composed this work late in his life, shortly after his transfer from the Observants to the Capuchins.

[92] *Breve discorso circa l'osservanza del voto della minorica povertà* (Brescia: Damiano & Iacopo Philippo, 1536). Modern editions can be found in *Monumenta Historica Ordinis Minorum Capuccinorum*, V (Rome, 1946), pp. 447–463; *I frati cappuccini*, I, 721–744. Cf. Fidel Elizondo, "El 'Breve discorso' de Juan de Fano sobre la pobreza franciscana," *Collectanea Franciscana* 48 (1978), pp. 31–63.

[93] For an initial overview and analysis of the Capuchin output of novice treatises and spiritual adhortations for novices, including those from the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see *I frati cappuccini*, I, pp. 1277–1485.

[94] *Operetta devotissima chiamata Arte de la Unione, la quale insegna unire l'anima con Dio, utilissima non solo a li regulari, ma ancora a li seculari spirituali et devoti* (Brescia: Damiano & Jacomo Philippo fratelli, 1536). A modern edition can be found in *I frati cappuccini. Documenti e testimonianze del primo secolo*, III: *Santità e apostolato*, ed. Costanzo Cargnoni (Perugia, 1991), pp. 297–429. For a first introduction, see F. Callaey, "De arte unionem cum Deo consequendi iuxta P. Ioannem a Fano addita appendice de septem doloribus S. Joseph (1536)," *Analecta Ordinis Fratrum Minorum Cap.* 39 (1923), pp. 259–264 and pp. 279–283; Optatus van Veghel, "Scriptores Ascetici et Mystici Ordinis Capuccinorum," *Laurentianum* 1 (1960), pp. 100–115.

proper bodily posture during prayer.[95] Many of the described prayer exercises focus on Christ. Yet in the midst of the *Arte* is found a short treatise on the seven sorrows and seven joys of Joseph: a sign of the growing importance attached to the Holy Family as a whole.[96]

Bernardino Palli's *Orazione devote*, another early Capuchin classic, should be seen in the context of the author's engagement in the drafting of the 1536 Capuchin constitutions, in which both liturgical and mental prayer received much emphasis. To help young friars finding the right mixture of interior peace and apostolic 'élan' in their personal life of prayer, the *Orazione devote* offers a basic doctrine of mental prayer exercises. Contrary to John of Fano, Bernardino's aim was not to prepare the friars for mystical union, which after all was a road only open to the elect. Instead, he devised a program of affective mental prayer that would help kindle the love of God in all Capuchin friars, building on elements central to their religious formation, namely humility, compunction, devotion to Christ's passion and to the joys and sorrows of the Virgin, the emulation of saints, and the systematic combat with the love of the self, the world, the flesh and all carnal pleasure.[97]

Coupling their life of prayer with their pastoral obligations, the early Capuchins became involved in the popularization of so-called *Quarantore* prayer exercises. Following initiatives by Barnabite monks and secular priests, Capuchin preachers active in northern Italy in the 1530s (such as Joseph Piantanida of Ferno, a driving force behind North-Italian catechistic schools for the urban youth), organized lengthy prayer marathons, in which urban confraternities were assigned set periods of silent mental prayer in front of a crucifix. The confraternity members should perform a prayer tour of forty hours each, after which members of another confraternity would continue, thus to create an unbroken sequence of mental prayer for a number of weeks (for instance the forty days leading up to Easter Sunday). Throughout these prolonged prayer sessions, which could be initi-

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[95] The best introduction to the work as a whole still is Remigius ab Alonso, "De Oratione Mentali in Ordine Fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum: Joannes a Fano," *Collectanea Franciscana* 9 (1939), pp. 164–192.

[96] See the work of Callaey mentioned in one of the previous notes, as well as Jean-Joseph Lemire, "Jean de Fano et la dévotion aux sept douleurs et sept allégresses de saint Joseph," *Cahiers de Joséphologie* 11 (1963), pp. 65–80.

[97] *Orazione devote* (Milan, 1535). Aside from other old editions, they were also edited in *I frati cappuccini*, III, pp. 40–43.

ated and concluded with processions and religious services, the participants needed to imprint the image of the crucifix upon their heart. Parallel to these sessions each confraternity habitually also assigned members to community service in the urban hospitals. Hence, the devout approach of the suffering Christ through prayer corresponded with an imitation of Christ's service among the sick and the poor.

From the Milan region, the *Quarantore* spread through Italy (in the 1540s and the 1550s), and thereafter to other Catholic countries in Europe and the New World. Although this practice was not of Capuchin or wider Franciscan origin, the Capuchins were quick to stimulate its proliferation and wrote specific guidelines and sermons for its proper performance. Some of these are anonymous.[98] Others were the product of renowned Capuchin preachers, such as Joseph of Ferno and Bernardino Ochino.[99] Their efforts tied in with Capuchin Christocentric spirituality, which fed on late medieval devotions to the Passion, the Eucharist, and the Holy Name of Jesus (a devotion that had been stimulated a century earlier by Bernardino of Siena and his Observant colleagues), and cohered with the Capuchin ambition to follow Francis of Assisi in his relentless *imitatio Christi*.[100]

The Capuchins also composed designated prayer books for lay people. Maybe the first of its kind is the 1539 prayer guide written by Girolamo of Molfetta: the *Alcune regule de la oratione*, based on a series of previously held sermons on the Holy Name of Jesus. This 'rule book' seeks to enable lay people to regain the Divine spouse (Christ) through a process of mental prayer. The prayer exercises

[98] See *I frati cappuccini*, III, pp. 2959–2962.

[99] Giuseppe da Ferno wrote in 1538 a *Metodo per le quarantore a San Sepolcro*. In 1540, Bernardino Ochino developed a programme of *Quarantore* prayers for the Milan confraternities. Partial editions of Bernardino's rather ambitious prayer programmes can be found in Cesare Cantú, *Eretici d'Italia. Discorsi storici* (Turin, 1866) II, pp. 33–44 and *I frati cappuccini*, III, pp. 2963–2973. In the later sixteenth century, Mattias of Salò would become a renowned propagator of the *Quarantore*. Cf. his *Ordini nella orazione delle quaranta ore* and the later methodological reworking of these in his *Trattato della santa orazione delle quaranta ore* (which eventually was printed at Brescia in 1588).

[100] On the Capuchin contribution to the *Quarantore* in general, see Costanzo Cargnoni, "Le quarantore ieri e oggi. Viaggio nella storia della predicazione cattolica, della devozione populare e della spiritualità cappuccina," *Italia Francescana* 61 (1986), pp. 329–460. It became common practice to produce additional sermons to accompany the guidelines. This initiated the output of a number of Capuchin booklets of *letteratura devozionale predicabile*, directed at preachers who were to instruct lay penitential groups engaged in mental prayer exercises.

in this work are followed by a series of meditative exercises on the Holy Name, which amounts to a guided tour through the 33 mysteries of Christ's life on earth from the incarnation to the Pentecost experience.[101]

Another popular Capuchin prayer guide from this early period is the *Specchio d'Orazione* by Bernardino of Balvano (d. ca. 1557).[102] Like Girolamo's *Alcune regule de la oratione*, Bernardino's prayer 'mirror' started its life as a series of quaresimal sermons (held at Messina in 1553). These sermons were reworked into an independent treatise meant to reflect in mirror-like fashion the light of prayer as it shone through the Word of God. In its 33 short chapters the work unites in an accessible fashion the biblical materials of interest for all those (lay and clerics alike) who, moved by their devout consumption of the biblical text, want to engage in serious mental prayer, to open their minds towards a deeper understanding of the biblical truths and the mysteries of Christ. It shows that, for Bernardino, the Bible was the ultimate prayer book, and that for him the fundamental objects of prayer were the mysteries of Christ Suffering, Christ Victorious and Christ Divine.[103]

Conclusion

Throughout the medieval period, prayer was a cornerstone of the Franciscan religious instruction to novices and to more advanced friars. This is born out by the teachings concerning prayer in the writings of Francis, in the texts written by his companions and early biographers, and again in the works of basic religious instruction written by David of Augsburg, Bonaventure and Bernard of Bessa.

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[101] *Alcune regule de la oratione mentale con la contemplatione de la Corona del nome di Iesu, predicate da Fra Hieronymo da Melfetta* (Milan: Francesco Cantalupo, 1539). For a partial edition, see also *I frati cappuccini*, III, 329–445. The *Regule* are directly dependent upon the spiritual works of Cordoni.

[102] *Specchio d'Orazione, nel quale con brevità si contengono la necessità, e i frutti di quella Specchio di oratione nel quale con brevità si contiene d'essa sacrosanta oratione la necessità e utilità con l'ordine e regole si ha d'essercitare e gli suoi frutti, utile e necessario a tutti i fideli cristiani* (Messina: Pietro Spira, 1553 & 1573). A corrected partial reprint of the 1553 Medina edition can be found in *I frati cappuccini*, III, pp. 555–636.

[103] Bernardo da Bologna, *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Ordinis Minorum S. Francisci Capuccinorum* (Venice, 1747), pp. 43ff., p. 185; Cf. Ottaviano Schmucki, "Lo 'Specchio di oratione' del P. Bernardino da Balvano, OFMCap.," *Italia Francescana* 65 (1990), pp. 5–32.

Both the reception history of these various materials, and the way in which their teachings were re-enlisted in the novice treatises and designated prayer guides of the fifteenth and early sixteenth-century, indicate that a proper initiation into the meaning and the techniques of prayer was never far from the mind of Franciscan educators. Whereas the religious life of the friars changed significantly after the 1230s, leading to a marginalization of the eremitical lifestyle within the order, prayer, so fundamental for the contemplative life, remained embedded in the instruction of novices and friars, and in the religious edification of the laity at large.

Nearly all authors mentioned in this essay placed their own accents. This being said, there is a remarkable continuity and correspondence in their teachings. This is partly the result of a common legacy of authoritative texts. Together with the writings by and the *vitae* of Francis, this legacy comprised for nearly all our authors the works of Cassian, meditative treatises by Bernard of Clairvaux and Richard of St. Victor, and the writings for the religious edification of novices associated with Hugh of St. Victor and William of St. Thierry.

The majority of our Franciscan authors made a clear distinction between vocal and mental prayer. They agreed that vocal prayer formed the basis, either in the context of the Divine Office or as a solitary activity. Of particular importance at this level was the *Pater Noster*, the ultimate prayer available to man. Francis of Assisi's own explanation of this text, as well as the way in which its performance was mentioned in the *Regula Bullata*, guaranteed it's significance for nearly all Franciscan authors who had something to say about the topic.

Nevertheless, most authors hoped to bring the novices and friars beyond this level of vocal prayer, even when they maintained that the *Pater Noster* text was the most perfect prayer available to mankind. In the end, Franciscan religious had to aspire to higher levels of mental prayer, which ultimately opened the door to contemplative insights into the Divine secrets, and came near to the experience of beatific vision enjoyed by the *beati* in the afterlife. Most authors discussed here, such as David of Augsburg and Bonaventure, saw the higher levels of mental prayer feeding into contemplation as an activity for the advanced. Francis of Osuna's *Tercer Abecedario* went further, stating that, for clerics and Franciscan friars in particular, vocal prayer alone would not suffice.

The importance of prayer within the Franciscan life was re-affirmed in the Observance, notably among the Villacreceans and comparable groups in the Iberian peninsula. Later, in the early sixteenth century, the Villacrecean initiatives to enhance the life of prayer among the friars themselves were taken over by others, notably the early Capuchins. In a very short time span, this new branch hammered out a Minorite lifestyle focused on prayer and poverty, without losing sight of pastoral objectives. Indeed, the Capuchins were most successful in exporting the Minorite life of prayer to society at large via a plethora of writings and public initiatives. Therewith, they stimulated the ongoing confessionalization of daily life, which already had started during the fifteenth-century Observant revolution, and would come to full bloom in the decades following the Council of Trent.

FROM CONTEMPLATION TO INQUISITION: THE FRANCISCAN PRACTICE OF RECOLLECTION IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY SPAIN

William J. Short

Introduction

When Cardinal Fernando de Valdés published his comprehensive *Index of Forbidden Books* in 1559, his action had a chilling effect on the publishing fortunes of many authors who treated the subject of prayer.[1] Spanish religious historian Melquíades Andrés has described the impact of the list of forbidden books in these terms:

> This Index is the incarnation and canalization of the antimystical movement in Spain. Its publication meant the death to publishing of Osuna, Bernabé de Palma, and Laredo, the first codifiers of the way of recollection.[2]

The three authors mentioned were Franciscans, Friars Minor of the Observant Reform. Their writings, published in the earlier part of the same century, had proven immensely popular as guides to what today would be called contemplative prayer. The books had been written to guide people in a way of life and prayer called "recollection." But in an atmosphere of fearful suspicion of the Protestant Reformation, printed books were subjected to the scrutiny of the Inquisition in Spain, intent on rooting out any traces of heterodoxy.

The times were turbulent, with discovery of new continents boggling the European mind, calls for reform of the Church "in head and members" booming from northern Europe. Martin Luther's writings, and those of Erasmus of Rotterdam, spread swiftly through literate circles, thanks to the communication revolution introduced by the printing press. National monarchies, as much religious as secular entities, used their powers to promote their preferred versions of

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[1] *Cathalogus Librorum, qui prohibentur* (Valladolid). A preliminary edition had appeared in 1551.

[2] Melquíades Andrés Martín, *Los recogidos: nueva visión de la mística española (1500–1700)* (Madrid, 1976), p. 391. English translation by the author.

church reform. In this heady mix of "God and country," interest in mystical phenomena, religious experience, and theological disputes burgeoned among the literate classes of Christendom. Strange or predictable as it may seem, it was this rich and sometimes confusing socio-religious environment that saw the blossoming of the "Golden Age" of Spanish mysticism, the *Siglo de Oro* of Ignatius of Loyola, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, the Polyglot Bible of Cardinal Cisneros, and the *Reconquista* of the Catholic Monarchs.

It is our purpose here to describe the "way of recollection" championed in the works of three important Franciscan authors; to describe this recollection in its main features; and to situate it within the context of the social and religious upheaval of sixteenth-century Spain. Our treatment will begin with some bio-bibliographical information on the authors themselves, followed by a description of the context in which they lived and wrote. A detailed presentation of recollection itself will follow, along with remarks on the influence of some earlier authors on these three Franciscan proponents of recollected prayer.

Three Writers and the Way of Recollection

The friar-authors of the forbidden books were associated with the Observant Reform, trained in the contemplative communities called "houses of recollection" then flourishing in Spain: Bernabé de Palma was a gardener; Francisco de Osuna, a priest; and Bernardino de Laredo, a pharmacist. Their major writings on recollection appeared within a brief arc of time, between 1527 and 1538. Here we give a brief biographical sketch of each of these authors, with some comments on their most important writings.[3]

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[3] Limitations of space preclude a complete listing of all the Franciscan authors who promote the practice of recollection, but mention should be made of a few. Pedro de Alcantara (d. 1562), *Treatise on Prayer and Meditation* (*Tratado de la oración y meditación*). He was an influential figure in the life of Teresa de Avila, and published this treatise in 1559, based on the work of the Dominican Luís de Granada. Juan de los Angeles (d. 1609) published his *Dialogues on the Conquest of the Kingdom of God* (*Diálogos de la conquista del Reino de Dios*) in 1595. Other authors include Diego de Estella (d. 1578), Nicolás Factor (d. 1582), Juan de Bonilla (d. 1580), and Antonio Sobrino (d. 1622). An encyclopedic treatment of recollection, including exhaustive information on authors, can be found in Andrés, *Los recogidos*.

Francisco de Osuna (d. 1540/1). Our most complete available description of the way of recollection comes from Francisco de Osuna, particularly his influential work published in 1527, *The Third Spiritual Alphabet.*[4] Francisco was born in Osuna, perhaps in the *annus mirabilis* of 1492.[5] He entered the Observant Franciscans around 1513. We know little about his early life, but some suspect his theological education took place at the newly founded university of Alcalá, a project of Cardinal Cisneros. On completing his studies and ordination as a priest, Fray Francisco entered a *casa de recolección*, Nuestra Señora de la Salceda, in the early 1520s. There, according to his testimony, elder friars helped new arrivals to learn the characteristic form of prayer known as recollection. He had read widely and well in the literature on prayer available in his day: more importantly, he had been trained in the practice of recollection and had taught it to others. Among other works, Fray Francisco composed six "spiritual alphabets" (*abecedarios*) or, as he entitled them, six "parts of a book called *The Spiritual Alphabet.*"[6]

Heralding the systematization of a Franciscan form of contemplative prayer, Osuna lays out a method for prayer that includes a "quiet prayer." He called this form of prayer *recogimiento*, which may be rendered as "re-collecting" or "recollection." His work played an important role in the life of Teresa of Avila, who read his work with interest.[7]

In his *Third Spiritual Alphabet*, he gives a thorough explanation of the "way of recollection," to be described more fully below. His intention in writing the *Alphabet* was pastoral: to give instruction on a valuable form of prayer to a wide audience, including his own Franciscan brethren, other religious, and devout laity, men and women, who sought reliable guidance in the path toward deeper

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[4] The critical edition can be found in Melquíades Andrés, ed. *Francisco de Osuna. Tercer Abecedario espiritual. Estudio histórico y edición crítica* (Madrid, 1972) (cited hereafter as Andrés, *Abecedario*). A more recent edition can be found in Saturnino López Santidrián, ed., *Tercer abecedario espiritual de Francisco de Osuna. Introducción y edición* (Madrid, 1998). A modern English version is available in *Francisco de Osuna: The Third Spiritual Alphabet*, trans. Mary E. Giles (New York, 1981), hereafter *Alphabet.*

[5] For biographical information see Andrés, *Abecedario*, pp. 3–5.

[6] Between 1527 and 1532 he published four *Abecedarios*; a fifth was published posthumously in 1542, the sixth in 1554. The prayer of recollection is described most thoroughly in the third.

[7] For references to Osuna in the works of St. Teresa, see Andrés, *Abecedario*, pp. 107–109.

familiarity with God. The practice of "recollection" was designed to fill this pastoral need, directing readers toward an authentic practice of a quiet attentiveness in their life of prayer.[8]

This work of Osuna also had another purpose: to distinguish the authentic type of recollected prayer from the explanations of it by *alumbrados* ("the enlightened"), condemned by the Franciscans in 1524 and by the Inquisition in 1525. These teachers and practitioners of quiet prayer, to be considered more fully below, exaggerated its passive aspect, and explained interior prayer as sufficient in itself, without common, liturgical or vocal prayer. The popular preacher and spiritual teacher of La Salceda clearly needed to present an explanation and defense of a method of prayer he himself had practiced and taught to many others (including some of those who were now condemned). We may consider this a *felix culpa*, because the crisis provoked a written account of what appears to have been, until that time, a system of oral instruction.

Bernabé de Palma (d. 1530 ca.). His work, entitled *Via Spiritus*, surprised readers because it was written by a Franciscan lay brother, a gardener by trade, of Sicilian stock. It was published in 1532, compiled by a group of his friends after his death.[9] In his book he laments that for over twenty years he had struggled with traditional ascetical and devotional practices, eventually suffering from a kind of spiritual exhaustion. He had no one to introduce him to other ways of prayer. After long searching he finally discovered what he calls *oración mental*, 'mental prayer'. From his description of this prayer, we can identify it as the practice we now know as recollection.

His approach moves through four movements toward union with God, not as stages following strictly one after another, but as realities that remain in some way always present within us. One begins with the practice of a recollected style of life, including traditional ascetical practices of fasting, physical mortification, control of speech and thoughts.

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[8] The practice and its pastoral application are clearly described in Fr. Benjamín Monroy Ballesteros, O.F.M., *Contempla y quedarás radiante: Los místicos franciscanos hoy* (private printing, Zapopan, Mexico, 2002). I am deeply indebted in this study to the research of my confrére Benjamín Monroy, and grateful for our extended conversations on this topic.

[9] A modern edition is available in *Via Spiritus de Bernabé de Palma, Subida del Monte Sión de Bernardino de Laredo*, ed. Teodoro H. Martín (Madrid, 1998). See also "El sistema de Bernabé de Palma," in Andrés, *Los Recogidos*, pp. 176–192.

In a second movement, one looks inward upon the inner self, with a searingly honest evaluation of vices and sins, and the nothingness of the self if left to its own devices.

There follows a third movement, that of gazing upon the greatness of God surrounding, eneveloping us, which Bernabé characteristically calls *conocimiento cuadrado*, 'squared knowing' of God, in the four dimensions of height, depth, width and length.[10]

The fourth step in this process cannot be called a movement at all, but rather rest, a state of quiet attention to God, "knowing how not to work." In this restful state, free of ideas but filled with love, the soul is lifted by God and touched in all its parts, "like a sunflower touched by the sun."[11]

Given his experience, it is not surprising that he wrote disapprovingly of the devotional practices he had used for so many years with little profit. Criticized for its overly negative opinions on other "ways" of devotion, his work was judged dangerous enough to earn a place on the *Index*.

Bernardino de Laredo (d. 1540). Born in Seville in 1482, son of a wealthy family, Bernardino trained as a page in the home of a nobleman. A student of medicine in the University of Seville, he was practicing medicine by 1507. Inspired by the example of a lawyer friend who entered the Franciscans as a laybrother, Bernardino chose the same path in 1510, living until his death among the Observant friars, whom he served as apothecary of his local house and his Province. He also served King John III of Portugal and Queen Catherine in the same capacity. His first publications, in 1522 and 1527 are concerned with medical topics and pharmacology.[12]

In 1529 he finished writing an influential book on the way of recollection, *The Ascent of Mount Sion*, published only in 1535, after six years of examination by various theologians.[13] In 1538 he published a second edition, with considerable differences in the presentation. In the first edition, he appealed frequently to experience as a guide

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[10] See Andrés, *Los recogidos*, pp. 183–186.

[11] Andrés, *Los recogidos*, p. 192.

[12] *Metaphora medicinae*, in Spanish (Seville, 1524) with a concluding chapter on religious practice in healing; and *Modus faciendi cum ordine medicandi* (Seville, 1527) the first pharmacopoeia written in Spanish.

[13] See the edition in Martín, *Via Spiritus . . . Subida del Monte Sión* (hereafter *Subida*). An English version can be found in *The Ascent of Mount Sion, being the third book of the treatise of that name*, trans. E. Allison Peers (New York, 1952), hereafter *Ascent*.

to understanding what he writes: in the second, he appealed instead to the authority of Scripture, the Fathers of the Church, and other important ecclesiastical authors.[14] He mined thoroughly the *Mirror of Perfection* of the 14th century Flemish Franciscan, Hendrik Herp, which had been published in Latin and, under the patronage of King John III, into Portuguese.[15]

Bernardino, following the lead of his Franciscan confreres, Bonaventure and Francisco de Osuna, insists on the primary of affection, love and desire in the quest for deep intimacy with God.[16] The understanding, our thinking faculty, needs to enter a time of rest in order to allow our feeling faculty to carry us beyond the limits of thought. He develops this notion in his famous phrase: *no pensar nada* ("think nothing"). His work proved helpful to Teresa of Avila in her struggles to understand her own experience of "quiet" prayer, as she testified in these terms:

> Looking through books to see if I could learn how to describe my method of prayer, I found in one, called *The Ascent of the Mount*,[187] which describes the union of the soul with God, all the symptoms I had when I was unable to think of anything. It was exactly this that I was always saying—that when I was experiencing that type of prayer I could think of nothing. So I marked the relevant passages and gave him the book, in order that he and that other cleric to whom I have referred, a holy man and a servant of God, should look at it and tell me what I ought to do.[17]

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[14] Andrés, *Los recogidos*, p. 197.

[15] Latin versions (Cologne, 1509; rev. ed., 1513); (Antwerp, 1516); (Venice, 1522, 1523, 1529); the Portuguese version, trans. Canons of Santa Cruz, *Espelho de perfeyçam em linguoa portugues* (Coimbra, 1533). A Spanish version appeared later, in the same year as the first *Index* of Valdés, omitting the third and fourth parts, on contemplative life: *Espejo de perfección*, trans. Carthusians of Scala Dei, Tarragona (Alcalá, 1551).

[16] The authorities he uses frequently to support this approach are Richard of St. Victor (d. 1173), particularly his work *De arca mystica*; and Henry (*sic*) of Balma. This Henry of Balma (d. 1439), was a Franciscan friar, collaborator of St. Colette of Corbie (d. 1447), and author of some spiritual works for the Poor Clares. Bernardino confused *Henry* of Balma with *Hugh* of Balma (fl. latter half of 1200s), Carthusian, author of an important work, *De Theologia Mystica* (also called *De triplici via* and *Viae Sion lugent*) likely influenced by Bonaventure and mistakenly attributed to him in the 1495 Strasbourg edition of Bonaventure's works. It is to the work of Hugh of Balma that Bernardino is referring, published in Toledo in 1514, under the title of *Sol de contemplativos*.

[17] The text reads (with emphasis added): "Mirando libros para ver si sabría decir la oración que tenía, hallé en uno que se llama *Subida del Monte*, en lo que toca a la unión del alma con Dios, todas las señales que yo tenía en aquel *no pensar nada*,

Bernardino's approach to recollection uses a familiar three-fold pattern. Taking as his organizing principle an adaptation of a saying of Jesus, "deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me," Bernardino describes in the first two parts of the *Ascent* the purgative way (deny youself) and illuminative way (take up yourself) in the journey to Sion. In the third section, on the unitive way (follow me), Laredo provides what are really a series of essays, describing a threefold progression, moving from the early stage of *recollection* to a stage of *quiet*, and finally to *union*. In this dynamic movement, the soul first *draws near to itself* (recollection); then *enters within itself* (quiet); and finally *soars above itself* (union). This threefold pattern is a familiar one, used by Bonaventure in *The Soul's Journey into God*, and by many authors of the intervening generations.

The Way of Recollection

The spiritual path or way of recollection was both a manner of praying and a style of living. The prayer centered on grace, desire, and love, rather than on instruction, understanding and reasoning. It required time alone, silence, and the removal of external distractions. The style of living associated with it, intended for any devout Christian, emphasized organizing one's activities in such a way as to provide time for quiet and prayer each day, and a way of managing daily business in such a way as to keep times of prayer free from the distractions of other responsibilities.

This living tradition of spiritual practice, from the late 1400s onward, was offered to devout members of the laity, and to interested members of the clergy who looked to the Franciscan houses of recollection as sources of spiritual teaching, in individual conversation and in organized classes or conferences. The "oral tradition" of the practice of recollection endured into the 1520s, as friars from the contemplative communities gave spiritual talks to groups of interested persons in private homes, offering instruction and guidance in the "way of recollection."

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que esto era lo que yo más decía: que *no podía pensar nada* cuando tenía aquella oración; y señale con unas rayas las partes que eran y dile el libro para que el otro clérigo que he dicho, santo y siervo de Dios, lo mirasen y me dijesen lo que había de hacer." *Autobiografía* Chap. 23, referring to Chap. 27 of the third part of the *Ascent*, cited in Martín (1998), pp. xli–xlii. English version available in *The Complete Works of Saint Teresa of Jesus*, trans. E. Allison Peers, (London, NY, 1957) I, p. 149.

As a part of this instruction, the friars devised mnemonic devices, brief phrases (distichs), arranged sometimes in alphabetical order. In their later, written form, these instructions are still available to us, even arranged in alphabetical order, as in the famous *Alphabets* of Osuna. An example or two may be helpful here:

> *Yntimamente asosiega y acalla tu entendimiento*: Intimately calm and quiet your understanding.
>
> *Oración antes del sueño, y después torna presto*: Pray before sleep, and return to it immediately afterward.[18]

Though with different emphases, Bernabé de Palma, Francisco de Osuna and Bernardino de Laredo present similar approaches to the practice of recollected prayer. Beginning with the "outward" practice of vocal prayer (the liturgy of the Divine Office, for example), the devout person turns toward the more "inward" practice of discursive meditation, one filled with thoughts and rich in the use of images. Up to this point, no one could criticize this thoroughly traditional method. The next step, however, became the source of controversy. The *recogidos* or "recollects" emphasized a stilling or quieting of intellectual activity and imagination, in order to enter a realm of affection and feeling, without the use of thinking. In this way, they taught, a new experience of prayer begins, in which "love meets Love" without the mediation of ideas. While presented in slightly different ways by the various authors, they presented fundamentally the same basic teaching on these essentials. The contemporary reader who is familiar with the writings of the later Carmelite mystics, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, will not find such teaching particularly surprising or shocking. But our three Franciscan authors wrote well before the great reformers of Carmel, and may rightly be considered pioneers in a largely unexplored dimension of spiritual experience in their day.

They intended that their teaching should spread far beyond the bounds of the Franciscan Order, as soon it did. Their intention, pastoral in nature, was that every Christian should have access to the riches of a living experience of God through love, and encouraged the practice of recollection as the best method to achieve it. Bernardino of Laredo wrote, in 1538, "It should be observed that, by the great

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[18] Andrés, *Abecedario*, Treatise 21 (Letter "Y"), p. 581, *Alphabet*, p. 547; Treatise 12 (Letter "O"), Andrés, *Abecedario*, p. 392; *Alphabet*, p. 337.

goodness of God, even the poorest and weakest creature can learn it, whether man or woman, if such a one desires to be His disciple."[19] This "democratization of contemplation" was a contributing factor to their proscription by the Inquisition.

Social and Religious Context of 16th Century Spain

Some understanding of the context in which these Franciscans lived and worked will help us better to appreciate their contributions and the difficulties they encountered when we turn subsequently to the more detailed description of their teaching.

The Spain of their lifetimes had seen the unification of the Kingdoms of Aragon and Castille under the "Catholic Monarchs," Ferdinand and Isabella who, in 1492, accomplished their goal of completing the *reconquista*, the "reconquest" of the entire Iberian peninsula from the Islamic occupation that had begun in the 8th century. With the expulsion or conversion of Muslims and Jews within their territories, the monarchy could implement policies assuring the Catholic character of their united kingdoms.

At the same time that the *reconquista* was being celebrated, the "voyages of discovery" by Christopher Columbus, under royal patronage, opened the eyes of Spain and all of Europe to a vast, new dimension to the world: the Americas. As the practice of recollection was being committed to writing, news of a "New World" excited the interest of the "Old World." The Observant Franciscans in Spain had already sent their first missionaries to accompany Columbus on his second voyage in 1493. The General Chapter of the Order in 1520 sent "twelve apostles" to preach the Gospel in Mexico. Accounts of new "ways," "routes," and "voyages" kept the printing presses of Europe busy. Some of the same friars dedicated to a contemplative search were also involved in the great mission effort, like Francisco de Osuna himself, who served as Commissary General for the new missions of the Americas.[20]

The movement known as recollection emerged in a rich context of spiritual practice. The traditional medieval approach to spiritual

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[19] *Ascent*, p. 121. Cf. *Subida*, p. 338: "Y hase de notar que no hay ningún pobrecito, ni varón, ni mujercita, si quisiere ser su discípulo, que no la pueda aprender, por la gran bondad de Dios."

[20] Andrés, *Abecedario*, "Introducción general," p. 16.

growth remained alive, emphasizing the cultivation and virtues and elimination of vices, through careful fulfillment of the obligations of vocal prayer and ascetical practices. Self-examination within this view served to identify personal progress or decline in the Christian life.

The practice of methodical mental prayer remained strong, particularly in Franciscan circles. Events of the life of Jesus, especially those surrounding his Passion, were to be the object of daily meditation of a discursive and imaginative kind, aimed at stirring up a response of the affections. The founders of the practice of recollection continued to encourage this practice into the sixteenth century, as a practice well-suited to lead toward the kind of silent, affective prayer they favored.

The way of recollection should be understood as part of a wider movement of reform and renewal in Christian life in Spain that had begun in the mid-1400s. Its general name is "Regular Observance," and it found expression in the newly-founded Order of the Jeronimites, and among Benedictines, Dominicans, and Augustinians.

To understand the authors we are examining, the Observant Reform among the Franciscans has a particular importance. Spanish Franciscans of the 1500s looked back to their founder Francis of Assisi as a model for their way of life. He had set out in the early 13th century on a way of life he claimed had been revealed to him "by the Most High:" to "live according to the pattern of the Holy Gospel."[21] This life, after the pattern of Jesus' life, included times of preaching and traveling in towns and villages alternating with times of withdrawal to solitary places. We cannot trace here all the rich variety of this latter, solitary dimension of Francis' evangelical life: the interested reader can find abundant material describing it in detail.[22] For our purposes here it is sufficient to recognize that Francis and his early companions spent long periods of prayer in solitude, at some distance from the towns, moving back and forth "between hermitage and city."[23]

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[21] *Testament* 14, *FAED* 1, p. 125, *Opuscula*, p. 439.

[22] See for example Octavian Schmucki, "Secretum solitudinis, mentis silentium. Il programma contemplativo nell'Ordine francescano primitivo," *Laurentianum* 14 (1973), pp. 177–222.

[23] On this theme, see Grado Giovanni Merlo, "Eremitism in Medieval Franciscanism," trans. Nancy Celaschi, OSF, in André Cirino, O.F.M., and Josef Raischl, eds., *Franciscan Solitude* (St. Bonaventure, NY, 1995), pp. 265–282.

By the end of the 13th century, the pastoral needs of the growing urban populations led the Order rapidly to move *away* from the hermitage and *into* the city.[24] Yet there remained among some of the brothers the desire to maintain that alternating rhythm of solitude in the hermitage and presence in the towns. Unfortunately this movement of "return to the hermitages" became identified with other controversies about the "spiritual" observance of the friars' Rule: notions of poverty, apocalyptic ideas, and challenges to papal authority. These controversies led to an unfortunate association of contemplative forms of Franciscan life with suspicions of heresy.[25]

A less objectionable movement for renewal of life in the hermitages began in the fourteenth century. A group led by a laybrother named Paoluccio de' Trinci of Foligno gradually gained a kind of grudging acceptance for their experiment in reviving the life of the hermitages. This movement came to be known as the "regular Observance" (from its emphasis on the *regula* or Rule), without the controversial adjective of "spiritual." As this movement grew in numbers and influence in Italy it encouraged the development of similar movements in Spain.

By the early fifteenth century in various parts of Spain small Franciscan communities of the hermitage type were being formed. Among the important leaders in this varied development were Pedro de Villacreces (d. 1422) and Juan de la Puebla (d. 1495). These friars moved out into isolated areas beyond urban centers, to occupy austere cells in the "desert" of the Iberian peninsula. Some of these places helped to shape the lives and writings of several authors we will consider here: La Salceda, Alcalá, San Francisco del Monte near Seville, and Torrelaguna. The form of Franciscan life practiced there included an emphasis on poverty, prolonged prayer, silence, and solitude, with some limited external ministry, notably in preaching.

After initial difficulties with the mainstream of the Order, these austere contemplative Franciscan settlements gained important political support. With the *reconquista* completed, the Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella, *los reyes católicos*, turned toward making of their nation not only a Christian state, but a devout one. For this

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[24] This movement is abundantly documented in Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division in the Franciscan Order* (Rome, 1987).

[25] See the lucid presentation of this complex phenomenon in David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans* (University Park, Pennsylvania, 2001).

purpose, under the direction of Cardinal Cisneros, from 1494 on, they supported the expansion of the "regular observance" among religious in their dominions, with a particular interest in Observant Franciscans.

The Observant proponents of the Franciscan hermitage used a new vocabulary to describe their settlements: *casa de recolección* or simply *recoleta* (house of recollection); or retreat (*retiro*), the same vocabulary used in their descriptions of contemplative prayer. From extant records of their legislation, we can reconstruct fairly accurately the environment in these schools of contemplative life. The houses themselves were small, and the individual cells for the friars were barely adequate for sleeping. Silence was observed for most of the day, and meals were accompanied by public reading of works of spirituality.

For the practices of prayer in these Franciscan communities, before 1520, our information comes from legislative texts, the statutes or ordinances approved for the houses of recollection. The schedule of common, vocal prayer was demanding (one might say exhausting): six to eight hours of day were spent in the devout recitation of the Divine Office, the celebration of the Mass, para-liturgical devotions and pious exercises. Some two hours in the morning and a similar period in the evening were reserved for "mental prayer," particularly focused on the Passion of Christ, with some form of methodical, discursive meditation, a popular practice of the time.[26]

It is difficult to say when or how a different practice developed, that form of quiet personal prayer that will eventually be named *recogimiento* or recollection. From the indications available to us today, we can affirm that by the 1480s some friars in the houses of recollection were practicing quiet, affective prayer in a way that they could teach to others. In 1527, Francisco de Osuna gave an indication of how long this method had been practiced: "An old man whom I confessed—he had practiced these spiritual things for more than fifty years—told me. . . ."[27] The practice was certainly well known by the 1520s, when the first written descriptions of recollection were published.

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[26] For some examples of this schedule, derived from legislative texts, see Costanzo Cargnoni, "Houses of Prayer in the History of the Franciscan Order," in *Franciscan Solitude*, pp. 209–264, specifically pp. 226–228. For a full treatment of the theme, see Dacian Bluma, O.F.M., *De vita recessuali in historia et legislatione O.F.M.* (Studi e testi francescani 14) (Rome, 1959).

[27] *Alphabet*, p. 561.

Recogidos and *Alumbrados*

The Franciscan proponents of recollection, the *recogidos*, must be distinguished from some of their contemporaries and disciples, called *alumbrados* "the enlightened," or *dejados*, practitioners of "abandonment." They had separated from their one-time colleagues and teachers, the Franciscan practitioners of recollection, in the wake of a stormy meeting in 1523.[28] Both practiced a similar form of quiet prayer. But the *alumbrados* fell under suspicion for their affirmations about this way to "immediate, secure and rapid" union with God through the practice of recollection.[29] Their contemporaries, and one-time partners among the Observant Franciscans, recognized that "many have erred not because they followed recollection but because they thought they did so when in fact, unmindful of the writings of the saints that could have helped them avoid error, they strayed from the path onto other somewhat pleasant little ways" (so, Francisco de Osuna, in 1527).[30]

In the early days the movement centered on Isabel de la Cruz, who began her activity about 1510 in Guadalajara, soon gaining the support of a disciple, Pedro Ruíz de Alcaraz. They flourished in the rich environment of spiritual exploration among *conversos*, converts from Judaism, and their meetings were animated by the presence of illustrious Franciscans: Francisco Ortiz, Francisco de Osuna, and Juan de Cazalla.[31] Their reading included works of Hugh of Balma, Angela of Foligno, John Climacus, and Catherine of Siena (all published by Cardinal Cisneros and his collaborators to promote the practice of recollection).[32]

While the friars preferred to speak of recollection, Isabel and her group preferred the vocabulary of "abandonment" (*dejamiento*), and their critics frequently called them "the enlightened ones" (*alumbrados*). By 1519 the Inquisition took an interest in the group, and by 1523 the two groups parted company. In the following year the Franciscan chapter of Toledo expressed its opposition to the school of Isabel de la Cruz and Alcaraz, followed by the Inquisition's decree against

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[28] A general overview is supplied in Antonio Márquez, *Los Alumbrados. Orígenes y Filosofía*, 1525–1559 (Madrid, 1972).
[29] Andrés, *Los recogidos*, p. 355.
[30] *Alphabet*, pp. 38–39.
[31] Andrés, *Los recogidos*, p. 356.
[32] Andrés, *Los recogidos*, p. 358.

them in 1525. The friar Francisco Ortiz, in 1529, described the movement of the *alumbrados* as one characterized by their "false understanding of true words."[33]

The fear of *alumbrados* as a form of crypto-Lutheranism, with their appeal to a direct, personal experience of God in prayer, led to the broad condemnation by Cardinal Valdés in his 1559 *Index* of works that earlier would have been considered thoroughly orthodox.

The excesses of the *alumbrados* had led to the suppression of excellent works on prayer, now considered classics of authentically Christian and Catholic spirituality. But this suppression comes only later, and the Franciscan authors on recollection enjoyed nearly three decades of relative freedom in publishing their teaching before the *Index* suppressed it.

Practice of Recollected Prayer

In his study of Peter of Alcántara, the distinguished Franciscan scholar Rafael Sanz Valdivieso remarks about the way of recollection that, at first, "that spiritual path did not even have a baptismal name."[34] By the middle of the 1520s a name had been given to it, that of "recollection," *recogimiento*,[35] one that helped to distinguish it from other similar forms of prayer current at the time. To understand it more thoroughly, we turn now to a more detailed description of the practice of recollection, drawing primarily on the very thorough work of Francisco de Osuna in his *Third Spiritual Alphabet*, with some illustrations from the works of Bernardino de Laredo and Bernabé de Palma.

At the outset, Osuna advised his readers that they should not expect to begin their first experiences of prayer with this practice of recollection. He presumed that a person begins with some basic elements: the practice of public, liturgical prayer; and "many years" of meditative prayer (*oración mental*).[36] The latter, highly developed in earlier Franciscan authors, focused particularly on richly imaginative meditations on events in the life of Christ, a practice to which Osuna

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[33] Andrés, *Los recogidos*, p. 358.

[34] Rafael Sanz Valdivieso, O.F.M., *Vida y escritos de San Pedro de Alcántara* (Místicos franciscanos españoles I) (Madrid, 1996), xxxix. English translation by the author.

[35] The name is supplied by Francisco de Osuna in his *Tercer Abecedario Espiritual*.

[36] *Alphabet*, p. 486.

himself dedicated a significant amount of his writings.[37] It is fundamentally this meditative practice, with particular emphasis on the affective and imaginative dimensions of prayer, that prepares one for the simplified, quiet form of prayer that he called recollection.

While the *Third Spiritual Alphabet* speaks of steps and degrees, it does so in a fluid and dynamic way. There are beginners, proficient and perfect practitioners of recollection, but the individual does not remain fixed in one state all the time. There are "ups and downs," just as there are among the classical stages of spiritual growth called purgation, illumination and union. Yet there are certain characteristics of growth in maturity that mark the progress along this way, beginning with a general reorientation of one's life and continuing with a specific reorientation of one's life of prayer.

In the *Alphabet* Osuna describes these as general and special recollection. General recollection may be understood as a habitual attitude or condition, a style of living and acting: "This recollection is a moderation and serenity in the soul that is as quiet as if becalmed." It is this general tenor of life that contributes to growth in recollected prayer: "To accomplish this, we must also be recollected outwardly inasmuch as the one supports the other."[38] This general recollection is described as a way of living, one that serves as a helpful environment for the next steps. The recollected way of living is available to everyone, from ecclesiastical dignitaries to manual laborers: all can practice general recollection.

Within this way of life marked by serenity and quiet in the midst of daily work and responsibilities, the practitioner of general recollection is slowly introduced to a deeper dimension of experience, gradually turning toward the "inner world." One re-collects or gathers within oneself the powers of the soul, bringing them into interior unity from their fragmented expression in a great variety of

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[37] Francis of Assisi, in his *Office of the Passion*, organized texts from the Psalms and other Biblical texts as an extended meditation on key events in the life of Jesus. The tradition was further developed by Bonaventure, for example in his text entitled *The Tree of Life* and his meditations *On the Five Feasts of the Child Jesus*. Among other authors of the Franciscan tradition we may note just a few: James of Milan (fl. mid-1200s), *The Goad of Love* (*Stimulus amoris*), translated and edited by Walter Hilton in 14th-century England; Ubertino da Casale, *Arbor vitae crucifixae Iesu* (written in the early 1300s). Osuna dedicated his sixth *abecedario* (published posthumously in Medina, 1554) to meditations on the five wounds of Christ's Passion.

[38] *Alphabet*, p. 387.

outward activities. This gathering or collecting simplifies the multitude of thoughts, feelings and actions, focusing them on a central point in the center of the self. Deep self-knowledge is the first object of this inward turning, bringing with it an attitude of humility, a sense of our own limitations and weaknesses, and a corresponding sense of the immensity and compassion of God.

If general recollection might be understood as the cultivation of a contemplative way of living and acting, special recollection may be described as a specific practice of prayer favored by that kind of living. Osuna writes of special recollection as that time "when you retire secretly to pray silently to the Lord, leaving aside absolutely every other occupation and business so as to devote yourself exclusively to total recollection without your concern being fragmented."[39]

The basic movement in this type of prayer at first is a quieting of the pieces of the external world that fill our minds with images and thoughts of whatever is outside us.[40] This is an operation of cleaning out our inner dwelling place, sweeping away the multitude of words, ideas and images that fill it. Osuna readily admits the difficulty of beginning the practice of "turning inward," and encourages those beginning this form of prayer to remain patient amid difficulties.[41] Such patience is the key toward reaching the goal of inner silence.

Far from being an unusual practice, limited to religious living in remote houses of retreat, recollection can be practiced by any serious Christian. Even "merchants of prosperous businesses" are capable of this special recollection, Osuna asserts; and if they can do it, anybody can![42]

The examples he uses tend to underscore how this practice of prayer can be carried out in varied circumstances, with some practical steps that can be of assistance.

> *Quitar debes todo estorbo, hincando en tierra los ojos.* ("You should remove every obstacle by fixing your eyes on the ground.)"[43]
>
> Our letter [Q] advises you not merely to look at the ground, but to gaze on it intently, like people who are forgetful, lost to the world in

[39] *Alphabet*, p. 388.
[40] *Alphabet*, p. 559.
[41] *Alphabet*, p. 480.
[42] *Alphabet*, p. 389.
[43] Andrés, *Abecedario* XV (letter *Q*), p. 434; *Alphabet*, p. 384.

> thought, and out of themselves. Some are more inclined to recollection if their eyes are closed, but if you are with others it is better to avoid conversation by gazing attentively at the ground, or the floor or some other place of such little interest to you that your imagination will not be incited to fantasies. Using this technique, you can be deeply recollected even in a crowd, for you lower your eyes and keep them safely on a spot that is particularly dark and small, and if you concentrate your gaze there, your heart will be less prone to wander.[44]

Through the use of these simple techniques, and with some patience and practice, a person can gradually become accustomed to entering a recollected state even when in the company of others. To accustom his readers to recollection, Osuna recommends two periods of this kind of prayer each day, one before midday, the other at another time that is conducive to quiet: each period should be a good hour in length.[45]

The inner calm necessary for special recollection demands freedom from worry, particularly worry about our own sins, once they have been confessed and forgiven. In order to help us, we must be aware of our conscience ("*synderesis*, the highest part of reason" whose function is "to murmur against evil and encourage us to good").[46] We allow the conscience to become still both by avoiding evil and by letting go of its remembrance.

Once the conscience is at peace we can then quiet the speculative part of our understanding, which is always "curiously scrutinizing and analyzing the secrets of things."[47] This means gradually learning to quiet the thinking process (*callar el entendimiento*).

"All natural movements are directed toward quietude . . . nothing moves except for the purpose of finding that repose which all things seek as their ultimate end."[48] Osuna applies this principle to the movements of the understanding (imagining, thinking, considering, speculating). He advises that we "calm the understanding and quiet it."[49] He insists that does not mean "to quiet the intelligence but the understanding."[50] In fact, a kind of deeper intelligence, an "affective

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[44] *Alphabet*, p. 390.
[45] *Alphabet*, p. 388.
[46] *Alphabet*, p. 549.
[47] *Alphabet*, p. 556.
[48] *Alphabet*, p. 547.
[49] *Alphabet*, p. 548.
[50] *Alphabet*, p. 562.

knowing" through experience gradually replaces the other, more familiar way of understanding through speculation and ideas.

The process of deeper (or higher) prayer builds on these earlier conditions and practices. When the mind and feelings are no longer fragmented but unified and concentrated, and the conscience stilled, the recollected person can begin to rest, and in this rest to remain quietly attentive, gradually calming the many thoughts and images that intrude on the inner stillness. With the understanding quieted, the will can now expand with desire, as "we form brief prayer that at once penetrates the heavens." "It uses no means other than love to reach God; and love can immediately join with him."[51]

Bernardino de Laredo gives a beautiful description of this affective way of prayer:

> By the flights of these souls, as we know, are meant the desires and the fire of love, and the flights are made in the early morning, when souls that are greatly skilled in quiet contemplation are so trained by God that, on their desiring to soar by way of aspiration, they are raised in a moment on the wings of love and are united to their God, and in a moment pass beyond all the extremes of imagination and understanding and natural reason.[52]

Once the discursive, thinking activities have been calmed, the person at prayer enters a realm in which there is little that is understood, darkness as far as the mind is concerned, but a darkness that teems with a sense of presence, something felt or sensed rather than understood.

> The silence of love is marvelous . . . the understanding is profoundly quieted, receiving the sublimely contenting knowledge of experience. We clearly realize that when lovers are present to each other, they fall silent and the love that unites them supplies the want of words.[53]

Osuna also uses of the image of child in its mother's arms to express this loving contentment in another way: "words cease and deeds arise; when the soul is quiet, not knowing what it asks, for all its desires have been met."[54]

This loving silence has three dimensions: the cessation of thinking; an attitude of listening; and an experience of sleep.

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[51] *Alphabet*, p. 556.
[52] *Ascent*, pp. 131–132; cf. *Subida*, p. 210.
[53] *Alphabet*, p. 558.
[54] *Alphabet*, p. 558.

Thinking Nothing: "No pensar nada"

Bernardino de Laredo describes the love-filled silence of recollection in these terms:

> It is certain, and very evident, that it is not silence from words which is here spoken of, but a silence of the understanding, a serenity of the memory and a quietness of the will. At such a time there must be not a shadow of thought concerning aught soever, nor must aught else be done, nor other operation be performed, save only the affective, whereby the soul is occupied in love, for if anything were to excite the soul the silence would not be one of perfect solitude. Denuded of its faculties, the soul must be wrapped round in love, and must have no other separate occupation. It must be noted that in this manner of pure contemplation the faculty of our free will ceases not for a moment to occupy itself in love, but in this its occupation there must be no consciousness or feeling of the least excitement, nor is there any way wherein the soul can be aware of the perfection of that which it is doing, save in its own satisfaction, when it is transformed into its Beloved through the bond of love.[55]

As thoughts and bits of imagination rise up in this darkness, and thinking attempts to intrude on the quiet, the person at prayer repeats the exercise of re-gathering or re-collecting, gently turning back toward the heart.

For Francisco de Osuna, this inner silence can be understood negatively and positively. Negatively, it is the absence of thinking: all fantasies, imaginations, and kinds of visible things cease in the soul.[56] Positively, it may be called attentiveness, listening to the other, to the Lord who speaks. After some time of repeated practice, the practitioner of recollection will begin to find the "inward turning" becomes less difficult, and the experience of inner peace that accompanies it will give a taste of God's presence, something attractive and desirable. The movement from "turning inward" to "inner silence" becomes familiar and requires less time. And in that inner silence the "hope of grace" becomes lively as the person awaits God's good pleasure. As a practical matter, Osuna recommends a half-hour of resting in this silence, though this period can be lengthened gradually.

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[55] *Ascent*, pp. 97–98.
[56] *Alphabet*, p. 559.

Using the vocabulary of Osuna, so well explained by Fr. Benjamín Monroy in his work on Franciscan mystics, we may identify this mature level of the prayer of recollection with "attention" and "intention."[57]

Attention and intention must be centered in something: Osuna recommends focusing on God as the One and Highest Good.[58] In this he echoes a favorite divine title in the writings of Francis of Assisi: "the only true God, who is the fullness of good, all good, every good, the true and supreme good, Who alone is good."[59]

Attention that is "lively and intense," united with "the most firm" intention of turning toward God should not be confused with straining or tension (though reactions of this kind may be common at first). Rather the notes of tranquility, freedom and relaxation should gradually come to characterize this state of mature recollected prayer.[60]

In this silence, one awaits God's direction, ready to fulfill any command, attentive, in a "kind of spiritual leisure," which Osuna compares to the attitude of Mary who sits at Jesus' feet and listens to him.[61]

Having turned from gazing toward the outside world to a gazing toward the inner world of the self, one turns inward again, from *within* the recollected state, as if noticing oneself in the state of recollection.[62] In this condition, one comes to the goal of the preceding practices: God alone fills the memory, in a lively and intense presence.[63] Now the one who prays, "quiet in God," forgets self and is transformed in God: *endiosado*, "divinized."[64]

This is accomplished "in God," as "the soul is entirely transformed in him and tastes his sweetness abundantly, resting in his sweetness as if in a wine cellar." It falls asleep in its very self, forgetful of its human weakness, for it sees itself made like God. Osuna uses two examples to illustrate this deep resting in God: that of Moses entering the cloud on the mountain; and "even more fully" that of Saint John "when he leaned on the Lord's breast after the supper and everything he felt ceased."[65]

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[57] Monroy, p. 43.
[58] *Alphabet*, p. 487.
[59] *Earlier Rule* 23.9, in *FAED* 1, p. 85; *Opuscula*, p. 401.
[60] Monroy, p. 44.
[61] *Alphabet*, p. 560.
[62] *Alphabet*, p. 485.
[63] *Alphabet*, p. 487.
[64] *Alphabet*, p. 561.
[65] *Alphabet*, p. 561.

Effects of this Practice

Among the effects of this focusing of attention and intention on the Good God, Osuna notes a certain illumination of the understanding: not an enlightenment of many ideas, but one of clarity as if in a single thought encompassing many. He also speaks of a calm in the memory, without rapid movement from remembering one thing to another. And he speaks of warmth in the will, like an indescribable fire. The total effect is one of *broadening*, as the soul becomes larger. Using a very down-to-earth image, he says this growing expansiveness within is "like a glove being inflated" by blowing into it.[66]

As one rests in this deep and rich silence, one is "knowing divine things experientially."[67] Such knowing is not discursive but intuitive; not the fruit of questions and answers, but of delight. "If you accustom yourself to this silence and recollection it will cause very good things for you and will show God to you through experience."[68]

The fruit of recollection, in this lively and quiet experience of God, is an "enlightening" (*alumbramiento*) as the soul "delights secretly:" "it becomes clear to itself, and this it therefore calls 'enlightening,' and since it cannot explain it or make it understood to others, it calls it 'night.'"[69] Fray Francisco's confidant, mentioned earlier, described some of these effects:

> An old man whom I confessed—he had practiced these spiritual things for more than fifty years—told me in great confidence that among other mysteries it often happened that he listened to sermons and matters of God without understanding a single word. His understanding was so stilled and occupied from within that nothing of creation could take form in it. I told him that he should have withdrawn into solitude, whereupon he replied that the voices were like organ sounds to him, which pleased his soul, and though he could not understand them, his soul played in counterpoint to them, praising the Lord in music he could feel but not explain to others.[70]

This musical metaphor may serve as an appropriate summary of the teaching of Osuna and his confreres on recollection as a way of prayer. Like the experience of hearing beautiful music, the experience of silent, loving communication in recollected prayer is felt,

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[66] *Alphabet*, p. 485; see Monroy, p. 44.
[67] *Alphabet*, p. 562.
[68] *Alphabet*, p. 488.
[69] *Alphabet*, p. 483.
[70] *Alphabet*, pp. 561–562.

sensed in the affections, rather than understood through ideas. Their teaching about a quiet form of prayer may seem unremarkable to us today, accustomed as we are to various explanations of "contemplative" prayer. But it struck their contemporaries as something novel, provoking both enthusiastic acceptance and suspicious criticism. But the novelty lay more in the precision of their descriptions of inner states, traced with all the exactitude of cartographers in the Age of Discovery. The general outlines of their teaching in fact can be found in the works of many earlier authors, texts to which our authors frequently referred.

Sources for the Way of Recollection

A complete description of all the authors and works with an influence on the Franciscan texts on recollection would far exceed the limits of this study, as they include Pseudo-Dionysius, the Cappadocian Fathers, Augustine, Bernard and many others. We will examine here only three, Bonaventure, Hugh of Balma, and Hendrik Herp, if for no other reason, because there is some uncertainty about the way their works were used by the great teachers of recollection.

Bonaventure of Bagnoregio (d. 1274)

"If you wish to know how these things come about, ask grace not instruction, desire not understanding."[71] These words from Bonaventure's treatise on union with God, *The Soul's Journey into God*, gave a broad outline for the practice of recollection. The text was familiar in Franciscan circles and beyond, with its description of a journey toward mystical union in three major movements. Bonaventure begins the journey with a consideration of the vestiges of God in the world of creation outside us, likened to the illumination of evening twilight (Chapters One and Two). He then leads the reader inward, to consider the image of God to be found within the human person, in the memory, intellect, and will, a consideration compared to the light of early morning (Chapters Three and Four). In the third

[71] *The Soul's Journey into God, 7.6* in *Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey into God, The Tree of Life, The Life of St. Francis*, ed. and trans. Ewert Cousins (New York, 1978), p. 115; *Itin* (5.313b).

movement, Bonaventure invites the reader to consider God directly, as One and Three (Chapters Five and Six). In this consideration the understanding becomes darkened by the brilliance of God, compared to blinding light of the noonday sun. In such darkness all thinking ceases and the figure of the Crucified Christ as divine Love incarnate emerges as the means of passing over, through love alone, into God.

References to Bonaventure are frequent in the authors who are better educated in theology, notably Francisco de Osuna. Besides *The Soul's Journey*, his *Breviloquium* and *De triplici via* were popular bases on which our authors built their own teaching on prayer.

Hugh of Balma (d. 1304/5)

Our Spanish authors of the 16th century probably drew some of their greatest Bonaventurean inspiration from a work wrongly attributed to him at the time. This work is known by different names: *De mystica theologia*, *De triplici via*; or *Viae Sion lugent*. The author was Hugh of Balma, prior of the Charterhouse of St. Barbara (Cologne) in the late 1200s.[72] Curiously, his work may be indebted to Bonaventure, and the attribution of his work to his earlier contemporary is thus rather fitting. The Spanish version of Hugh's work, with the title *Sol de contemplativos*, was published in Toledo in 1514, contributing to the popularity of the affective approach to union with God, familiar to our authors from other (authentic) works of Bonaventure.[73]

Hendrik Herp (d. 1477)

A figure little known today, *nuestro Harfio*, "our Harphius" was a significant source for Franciscan authors in Spain's Golden Age. A member of the Brethren of the Common Life in Flanders, he learned the teaching on contemplative prayer offered by Jan Ruysbroeck. Herp joined the Franciscan Observants after meeting them in Rome

[72] An English version can be found in *Carthusian Spirituality: The Writings of Hugh of Balma and Guigo de Ponte* (Classics of Western Spirituality) (New York, 1997).

[73] To compound the problem, our authors refer to *Henry* of Balma as another source: here we have more confusion, between Hugh, the Carthusian of Cologne, with a similarly named Henry, a French Franciscan (d. 1439), a collaborator of St. Colette of Corbie in the reform of the Poor Clares and the reform of the "Coletan" friars.

in 1450, and became novice master for the Observants, Guardian of their community at Malines, and a popular preacher in his homeland. Because of his dual formation, among the Brethren of the Common Life and the Observant Franciscans, Herp was able to fuse the *Brautmystik* of Ruysbroeck with the affective *exstasis* of Bonaventure, creating a vigorous and attractive approach to divine union, and one that was simple, brief, and suitable for lay and religious, men and women.

One of his most important works was *The Mirror of Perfection* (in the original Flemish, *Spieghel der Volcomenheit*) or, in its Latin translation, *Directorium contemplativorum* or *Directorium aureum* (*The Contemplatives' Directory* or *Golden Directory*).[74] Composed originally in Flemish, it was intended for a devout laywoman who sought advice about growth in the practice of prayer.

Through their Latin translations, and later Portuguese and Spanish versions, his works exercised a profound influence on his brethren and others in Spain and beyond.[75] The Latin version of the work, by the Carthusian Peter Blomeveen, printed in 1509, made his work accessible beyond Flanders. The final part of Osuna's *Third Spiritual Alphabet* may show influences from Herp (or from their common source, Hugh of Balma).

Through the Portuguese version of his work (1533) Herp's influence expanded into Spain, making him accessible to Bernardino de Laredo, apothecary to the Portuguese royal family. While not citing Herp at all in the first edition of *The Ascent of Mount Sion* in 1535, Bernardino clearly had read Herp by 1538 when the second edition appeared. In that year, thanks to the work of the Carthusians of Cologne, several of Herp's works (including the *Directorium aureum contemplativorum*) were published in a single volume as *Theologia Mystica*.[76] Bernardino

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[74] Enrique Herp, *Directorio de contemplativos*, ed. and trans. Juan Martin Kelly (Salamanca, 1974), with Latin and Spanish text, ample introduction and biobibliography; and Enrique Herp, *Directorio de contemplativos*, trans. Teodoro H. Martín (Salamanca, 1991), Spanish translation, with introduction and notes by the translator.

[75] Latin versions of *Der Spieghel* were published in Cologne (*Directorium aureum contemplativorum*, 1509) and in Venice (*Speculum perfectionis*, 1524).

[76] See Martín, *Directorio*, pp. 26–27. Two major studies of Herp's sources and influence are Desiderius Kalverkamp, O.F.M., *Die Volkomenheitslehre des Franziskaners Heinrich Herp († 1477)* (Franziskanische Forschungen 6) (Werl/Westfallen, 1940); and Lucidius Verschueren, O.F.M., *Hendrik Herp, O.F.M., Spieghel der Volcomenheit. Opnieuw uitgegeven*. (Antwerp, 1931).

substantially revised the final part of *The Ascent of Mount Sion* in the 1538 edition, now clearly indicating Herp as his preferred author.[77]

By 1559 Herp's teaching on "direct seeing" of the divine essence had earned his works a place on the Inquisition's List of Forbidden Books.[78] Nearly thirty years would pass before another author, an Observant friar, well protected by his relations with the court, clearly referred to Herp as a source: Fray Juan de los Ángeles, in his *Diálogos de la conquista de reino de Dios* (1595). He described the "four ways" of prayer and contemplation (purgation, illumination, love and union) noting that "many saints" had composed lengthy treatises on these, "especially Saint Denis [Pseudo-Dionysius], Saint Bonaventure, and Henry of Herp."[79]

Conclusion

In the years after the *Index* appeared in 1559, it was only with great caution that authors could write about interiorized forms of prayer. The well-known difficulties of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross with the investigations of the Inquisition are only the most famous examples. Within the Franciscan Order the houses of recollection, and the corresponding contemplative practice known as the "way of recollection" gradually faded. By the late 1500s many of the remote *recoletas* had been abandoned. The contemplative practice they had nurtured for over a century fell into disfavor, as the lure of growing urban populations and the flourishing missions of the Americas and Asia captured the attention of new generations.

It may simply be an irony of history that one of the works that deeply influenced the early history of the way of recollection, the *Mystical Theology* of Hendrik Herp made its reappearance nearly a century after its appearance on the *Index* of 1559. The Observant Franciscans' 1633 General Chapter, held at San Juan de los Reyes

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[77] Martín, *Directorio*, p. 17 and n. 22.

[78] Martín, *Directorio*, p. 15. Though not the subject of censure during his lifetime, his approach to this "seeing the divine essence" and its misrepresentation by some practitioners, earned the suspicion of the Inquisitors, who put his *Theologia mystica* (including the Directory) and the abridged Spanish version, *Espejo de perfección*, on the *Index* (1559). On the specific propositions condemned in various acts of the Inquisition, see Martín, *Directorio*, pp. 104–113.

[79] *Fray Juan de los Ángeles. Conquista del reino de Dios*, ed., Teodoro H. Martín (Madrid, 1998).

in Toledo, made obligatory the reading of a text which in the previous century had been condemned:

> In every house, of whatever importance, the mystical theology of Herp should be given preference in presentations, not in Latin, but in the language of the people, so that the unlettered may also share in the bread of the spiritual life.[80]

This text, which had nourished Bernardino de Laredo and Juan de los Ángeles in their promotion of the way of recollection, was now to be required reading in Franciscan houses around the world. But by the time the decree was published the practice of contemplative forms of prayer had been seriously, almost permanently undermined by the suspicions and critiques of the 16th century. The "democratization of contemplation," particularly among the laity, promoted by the Franciscan houses of recollection, had been effectively quashed, in favor of the safe and secure traditional practice of the cultivation of virtues and eradication of vices, vocal prayer and ascetical practices. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries would see the almost complete disappearance of the Franciscan life in hermitages and houses of recollection. What few vestiges remained were swept away by the wave of wars and revolutions that followed. It was the Second Vatican Council's *Lumen Gentium* in 1964, that would echo that "democratization" with its affirmation of the universal call to holiness for all the baptized. Forty years after its publication, it may be fitting to recall some of the Franciscan pioneers of that view in the turbulent Spanish Age of Discovery.

[80] *Annales Minorum*, ed. Lucas Wadding (Florence, 1941), XXVIII (1633–40), pp. 32–33.

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